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JOHNNIE QUICKSTEP'S WHALING VOYAGE.

BY GEORGE PAUL GOFF.

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By GEORGE PAUL GOFF

AUTHOR OF "SAN ANTONIO AND ENVIRONS," "THE HAUNTED ISLAND," "NICK BABA'S LAST DRINK," ETC.

SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.
1894.

TO MY SAILOR BROTHER,

HARRY N. MORSE,

THIS BOOK IS LOVINGLY DEDICATED.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

HOW I CAME INTO THE WORLD.

THE story which I am going to tell is a part of the events of my youth, when the cares and trials of human existence had settled down upon my broad shoulders, sending me forth upon the journey of life with but few years and no experience at all.

I first saw the light in the great city of New York and came of well-born and well-bred parents, neither of whom inherited anything of this world's desirable things except energy, good manners, independence of character and industry. I had never seen my father except in a photograph, for reasons which will appear as this story progresses, but which to me were eminently satisfactory. The love and devotion of my mother to my father, and to his memory, was one of those beautiful episodes that belong to the scheme of matrimony, but alas, which seldom accompanies that theoretically blissful condition of life. She never tired of telling me all that concerned the author of my being, how he looked, how he carried himself, why I had never seen him, what he said, and much more that I do not think it important to relate at this time. In this way my love for him grew and increased into almost hero worship just from hearing his virtues

spoken of day and night from my earliest recollection.

It was during the absence of my father, who was serving his enlistment in the armies of the war for the Union, that I was solemnly ushered into this breathing world. I had no agency in bringing myself here, and so became *nolens volens* a factor in the battle of human life—a scheme which seems to me now to be fuller of thorns than of roses.

My father was a small merchant at the time he enlisted, and had a thriving business, which, could he have devoted himself to it, would have made a competence in time and enabled him to have supported his family in ease and comfort. The family comprised father, mother, and the humble individual who is telling this story. My father had good reason to believe when he departed for the seat of war that another member would be added to his family, and was apprised in due time by letter that a son had been born to him. That was all he knew about it, for he was killed in one of the first battles of that sanguinary fratricidal contest.

My real name was not Quickstep, but on the contrary quite a high sounding one, my father being descended from one of the old Knickerbocker families. But he was disgraced in the eyes of his aristocratic relatives, and cut off from family communion in consequence of having committed high treason by marrying my mother, who possessed his heart, and who was the one being in all the world to me, having patience, goodness, virtue, tact, education,

sweetness of temper and high moral attributes—what more could blue-blood demand?

I got the name I bear from my father in a way that boys do not usually get names, and it came about in this way. As I said at the commencement of my story, my father, when the old flag was insulted, enlisted to serve through the war for the preservation of the Union, leaving all his worldly possessions behind as thousands of others did at the time. He was, as I have before stated, unfortunately for me and for my poor mother, killed in one of the first battles of that God-ordained struggle—Well, as to the name I bear.

When my father departed with his regiment for the seat of war he was only a high private, but a hero all the same—a born soldier. He never lagged. He was always ready. When the command, "Forward!" was given he jumped to his duty with the greatest alacrity, going wherever his officers led, and, for this reason, his comrades had given him the nickname of Quickstep—a name that I was fonder of than I was of the blue-blooded one that had been flaunted in the face of my paternal parent, for disobedience and disloyalty to family.

He accepted the name thus earned and seemed to like it. But, he was reported among the slain, doing duty in an engagement with the enemy, when it was whispered through the camp in tones of sadness that Johnnie Quickstep had been killed.

My father was, under the nickname given him by his fellow-soldiers, frequently mentioned by

army correspondents for bravery and daring, so that all of his friends and neighbors at home knew who it was meant to compliment. He was always spoken of as Quickstep. This annoyed my mother immeasurably. She was a sensibly and sensitively proud woman, wrapped up in the career of her husband, and constantly endeavoring to have him known by the name he had given her at the altar, of which she was very fond. It was of no use, however, for the way in which he had acquired the name gave it the ring and fire of martial glory.

When I became old enough to take my place in the ranks of the boys of the neighborhood, to take part in their games and to engage in the struggles that all boys must encounter, in order to gain first or second place and escape becoming a but, my name was Quickstep, Johnnie Quickstep, for the boys did not know my real name. This I resisted at first with all my might, principally on my mother's account, and many fights resulted from the attempt to fasten upon me the name which my mother felt to be a degradation. She felt too keenly that the name was a disgrace, and at the same time a well-grounded fear that the name given me by the boys, half in sport, half in ignorance of my real one, might stick to me through my whole life, which it did until my early manhood.

The more I fought against it, however, the more the boys heaped it on, until I was compelled to make a show of not caring, thinking that, perhaps,

such a course might put an end to it; but it did not so work. It had gone on so long that I had partially forgotten my real name, and answered to that of Quickstep without feeling any sting, or even displeasure. After all, I argued with my mother, there is no taint attached to the name; it is signal of my father's patriotism, of his readiness to sacrifice everything by entering the ranks in defence of his country, and of his bravery in every battle in which he had participated.

My mother merely sighed, and it ended in her tacit acceptance of the name—a name that had been baptized in patriot blood. I began to like it the oftener I heard it. Its very sound quickened my blood. It was inspiriting; besides, it was emblematic of my father's devotion to the assailed flag of our country.

I was a public school boy, and attended that greatest institution of our beloved land nntil I was twelve years of age. I was moderately quick to conquer the rudiments, but was obliged to leave school and go to work in order that I might assist my mother with what little I was able to earn. On enlisting for the war my father had abandoned his business, as did thousands and thousands of other patriots when the alarm was sounded that the Constitution was in danger, and, of course, my mother was left to struggle through my babyhood, and my early boyhood, which she did with the courage and devotion of a Roman matron, with a bare sufficiency for our absolute wants, she often denying herself

necessary things that I might make a creditable appearance among my playmates.

My mother was a great and rapid reader. She read every book that she could lay her hands upon. As soon as I was old enough to comprehend, she placed useful and instructive books in my hands; encouraged me to read, herself leading the way, impressing always upon my mind the value and power of knowledge, thus developing whatever of latent power and appetite I may have had for study.

Under her guidance and instruction I had read, before I was fourteen years of age, the works of Cooper, Maryatt, Dickens, Bulwer, Ainsworth, the Spectator, Rambler, Tattler, and many more authors that I cannot now recall. I had read, also, Moore, Bryant, "Paradise Lost," the English Poets, "Robinson Crusoe," "Gulliver's Travel's," "Arabian Nights," "Pilgrims Progress," "Fox's Book of Martyrs," and had a fair acquaintance with Shakspeare. I had not mastered all these, but had browsed, as it were, on this vast field of literature, absorbing some of the choicest bits from each, picking up information here and there, and everywhere, thus sowing the seeds of ardent desire in the direction of extensive reading.

All this gave me an increased appetite for exploring the sources of knowledge, which I improved as I advanced to manhood. It was all stowed away in the lockers of memory, without order or plan, so far as I was then aware, when, all at once, I

found myself in possession of a great fund of information, which grew systematically afterwards.

My mother, at last, worn out in a constant struggle for existence, became enfeebled in health, and, after lingering along for a few years, died, with blessings on her lips for her orphan boy. She mourned with her latest breath that I should be cast out upon the cold world to battle alone with life; with none to encourage, to advise, or to guide me over the shoals of human endeavor.

I had inherited good principles from both parents, and these had been fostered, sustained and strengthened by the strong mind and admirable training of a loving mother. And so I started on my lone career with a strong conviction of the power of right, and the weakness of wrong doing. Besides, for a boy who had not had the advantages of thorough systematic schooling, I was quite learned—so I thought at the time. But I have lived long enough now to know that the sum of human intelligence is but to realize that the more one knows, the more one becomes aware of how little one really does know, and it is a long time after a boy discards his round-jacket that this comes to him in its full force.

CHAPTER II.

A FUNERAL.

THE night that my mother died I did not think that the record of all human woe could foot up anything to equal what I experienced as I saw her eyes closed in death—I still think so. It was midnight in the dead of winter when she passed away. Just at the time she breathed her last there came a light fall of snow, the starry flakes descended as noiselessly as spirits, settling gently as eiderdown, as though each one feared to crush the other, whitening the earth, like a mysterious, silent messenger from that celestial home to which my angel mother had been called. The world was mantled in a film of the beautiful snow, so white, so pure, that it seemed to my boyish wrought-up feelings to have been sent to shroud the universe in light as an emblem of the lovely character of the mother I had lost.

When she died we were very poor; some kind-hearted neighbors came in and took possession of our rooms, dressed the remains of my poor mother for the last sad rites, and the funeral took place. It was but a poor funeral: it lacked the parade and show of many such processions I had witnessed upon the streets; it lacked the pomp of caparisoned

horses with black plumes nodding to the motion of their heads; it lacked the pompous hearse with its blazonry of silver trimmings, and hangings of costly black velvet, but it was a real funeral, and meant more to me than if it had been consummated with all the pageantry of funeral folly—it meant desolation to me.

It left me homeless; at sea without a compass: alone in a world I did not know. When the hard cold clods of earth sounded upon the coffin my heart seemed stricken with a sort of paralysis: it seemed that all which the whole world had contained for me had suddenly vanished; all else seemed valueless.

When this saddest event was over I returned to the scanty apartments we had occupied together, broken hearted and desolate. One of my mother's friends, Miss Searson, a gentle, kind-hearted, sympathetic little body, came in to condole with me. This friend was a maiden lady, and was neither rich nor poor. She had a small income, sufficient for her frugal wants and something more, willed by a deceased father who had been dead for many years, leaving her without a relative in the world, so far as she knew.

She was about sixty years of age, though still retaining a girlish form, and one of the sweetest, gentlest of her sex. She was of medium height, of a graceful *embonpoint*, blue eyes which gave her face a benign expression, and gray hair, almost white, which she wore in the most graceful cork-

screw ringlets. To these she persistently clung because they were the mode when she was a girl. She dressed plainly, but always in the most exquisite taste.

The gossips said that she had been crossed in love in early life. I knew nothing about this, but if it were true it had left no harsh traces in her aged face. I know that she was good to me, and when she entered my desolate home the sunshine came with her. With the sweetest accent, which was balm to my wounded spirit, she said:

"Johnnie, what are you going to do?" and she sat down beside me in that confiding, inspiring way only to be done by a gentle woman. "God knows, Miss Searson, what can I do?" and I awaited her reply.

"Well, you cannot remain here," she answered, in an assuring way, "We will just see what there is here to be disposed of, and what it will bring if sold. You can make your home with me until you can look about and get something to do."

With tears in my eyes, and sobs in my throat I moaned:

"Oh, Miss Searson, you are so kind, so good. I am so heart-broken, so desolate. I will act as you think best I should do."

She made no reply, but turned her head away, and, as I observed, took her handkerchief from under her blouse and blew her nose as though she had a bad cold—I always believed that she used the handkerchief to dry her tears on that occasion.

Upon making an inventory of what might be turned into money we happened upon a small queer-looking package done up in straw matting. It had evidently been hidden away, as we found it in an obscure corner of an unused closet. Under the straw matting was a piece of old, worn-out carpet, and under this a piece of black cotton cloth, the whole bound with a strong cord.

When these wrappings were all removed there remained a small odd-looking earthen jar having a convenient slit for the admission of money. We broke it open and found that it contained enough to defray the expenses of the modest funeral.

The proceeds of the sale of the effects I gave to Miss Searson, begging her to keep it in part payment for my board and lodging, which she finally consented to do.

I remained with this generous friend for a few months and then departed, as will be seen hereafter. So, many times in after years, when I had become a rover of the seas, wave-tossed and sick at heart, I have thought of this good woman, and always connected her with my dead mother. I never turned into my cheerless bunk in the foul-smelling, smoke-clouded forecastle, nor turned out of it, that the remembrance and presence of both did not seem to light me, and guide me, to a useful manhood.

I was always fond of reading stories of the sea, and of ships and sailors. The subject had a charm for me—a fascination I could not resist. Often and

often when I had a holiday, and that was not a frequent event in my life, I would go to the docks and gaze in rapt admiration, not unmixed with awe, at the tall masts and intricate rigging, swaying to the sluggish undulations of the stagnant tide in the docks, against a background of dingy brick warehouses, the glory of whose brilliant red had faded out years ago to the arbitrary demands of time.

I used to look upon the sailors, in their outlandish dress and rolling gait, and wonder if they were like other men and lived in houses, and had mothers and sisters, and wives and children. And when they struck up their peculiar singing, which seemed to make everything move, tugging at ropes, or stowing away merchandise, which came to the ship on giant trucks, into the mysterious depths of the hold under the hatches, I felt certain that they must have come from Neptune's domain to do this special work, work which could not be done by people who had been born on shore and who live under a roof, and eat with knives and forks. This all grew upon me, and gradually the idea came to me that I wanted to be a sailor and go to far distant lands, where giants, and cannibals, and naked savages, and other strange things exist, and of which I had read so much.

The determination was gradually taking possession of me that I must be a sailor; that I must become the captain of a ship, and pace up and down the quarter-deck as I had seen them do while I had

been idling about the docks, half determining upon, half shrinking from, a life which seemed so closely connected with the silent depths of the great oceans.

I conjured up pictures of Robinson Crusoe surrounded with his goats; climbing up into his habitation when he wanted to go to bed, and drawing his ladder up after him in order to escape having his bones picked by savages. My memory reproduced those footprints in the sand, that cannibal feast, and the man Friday, bowing his face to the sand in adoration for, and devotion to, the strange being with a white skin who had rescued him from the cannibals. My dreams were all of ships and sailors. I saw sailors at the docks, on the ocean, aloft, spreading the white wings of commerce over deeply laden hulls—hulls stored full of the products of my own country, and pushing their speeding prows out into, and through distant seas, into foreign lands, to return burdened with the commodities of those countries. I felt that I was born to be a sailor, and I became one.

CHAPTER III.

AN AMATEUR TRAMP.

A FEW days after I had become an inmate of Miss Searson's home I started out to look for work. The situation I had filled before my mother's death was no longer open to me, for the reason that business had become very slack, when I was discharged, not from any delinquency on my part, but because I was the last boy who had been taken on, and that to me seemed perfectly just and fair.

At last I found an opportunity to go to a small town in a neighboring state, about a hundred miles from New York, and apprentice myself to a manufacturer of hats. I had always felt a great interest in hat-making, and used to stand in front of a hat factory, on my way to and from the public school which I attended, and watch the men as they worked around the steaming kettle of hot water. I used to watch them taking unmeaning bunches of wool, and cotton, and some sort of fur, and gradually form these materials into the semblance of a hat.

In those days apprentice boys were not considered much above the condition of the house-dog, and all sorts of indignities were put upon them. This was the discipline of my new place; drudgery, not

hatmaking, was the rule for the first year, and I was obliged to submit to it or take French leave. All this did not suit my impatient disposition. It was too much like slavery, and for merely board and clothes—the clothing consisting of the cast-off garments, and the board whatever might be left from the master's table. It was too slow, to say nothing of the degradation of the position. I was anxious to do something, to go somewhere, and so the old romance of the sea was constantly pushing other things aside. A perpetual longing to be on shipboard took possession of my whole being, and, while I had not yet resolved to follow that mode of life, the haunting determination was forming all the same with adamantine firmness.

There was one thing: I was going to be a man—to make a man of myself, and there was nothing in the surroundings of the hat-shop that could ever lead to that. I felt a modest confidence in being able to take care of myself—indeed, I know now, that I had, what the most of boys are gifted with, an inordinate amount of confidence, considering my pecuniary helplessness.

My wages, as I said before, was my board and clothes, when I could get any, with an occasional small amount of money, which, however, I earned outside of my regular duty. One morning my employer observed me idling about and wanted to know why I was not at my work, applying an offensive name to me.

"I am not going to work for you any longer," I replied.

"Not going to work any more," he repeated, "then, pray, what are you going to do—steal?" and he looked commiseratingly upon me, as though he thought I could not get away from him. My face became scarlet in a moment, and angry words were coming to my lips. I braced up, however, and remained as cool as I was able.

"I did not say I was not going to work any more, but that I was not going to work for you any longer."

This displeased him very much, and he said that I should not go. I declared that I would go, and asked him to pay me money enough to enable me to return to New York. He became more violent, saying:

"I will never pay you a penny. You shall stay here, and I will find means to keep you at your work," and he ordered me to get at it immediately.

I was now eighteen years old, well grown, stout, and strong as a horse—almost the stature of a man—and I felt a momentary desire to try my strength with him; my fingers tingled with the blood of anger. I calmed myself, though defying him by my manner and attitude, when he taunted me with the fact that I had neither friends nor money, and that I was homeless.

My mind was formed in a moment what I should do. I went to bed that night as usual, but, about midnight, when all was quiet in the house, I got up, dressed myself, took my bundle, containing all

I had in the world, over my shoulder. With my worn-out shoes in my hand, I had no stockings, in my bare feet I found my way down the stairs and out into the dark village streets and started on my way to New York. Before daylight I was miles away.

My soul was stirred with conflicting emotions. I felt bitterly revengeful against my employer, as I left his drudgery, and burdened with sorrow as though I had been bruised by the sharp angles of the world for fifty years, in place of having lived but eighteen out of that number. This feeling, while not a good one to have in one's heart, made me feel stronger, more self-reliant; and I think from that moment I became a man in spirit, though but a boy in years.

When I started on my tramp toward all the home I had, I was entirely without money, and I felt sick at heart to find myself a pauper, as it were. I wondered how I was going to reach that distant place, or even to live until I reached there. It was not at all plain how it was to be accomplished. However, for want of thought I concluded it must be a matter of chance, and if I could not get work to do I could starve.

The remembrance of my mother, and the good principles into which I had been educated by her, would not permit me to do aught that was not strictly proper and right. I could work my way along, if I could get it to do, and this I resolved should be my dependence. At all events I must

get to New York and solicit the advice of my best and only friend, Miss Searson, and get her views as to what I should next do.

It was important, nay, imperative, that I should reach my native city; and the only means I was able to devise to get there without starving on the road, was to work for any one who would employ me, even though I only got my food for my services. My wardrobe was not the most stylish, and, I am bound to confess, that my appearance was anything but creditable.

However, I was compelled to eat, and a sort of bravado took possession of me—a sort of sublime impudence, which I intended to cast off as soon as my plans for getting home were worked out. I felt it to be no disgrace to work for a meal if I were hungry, and so plod along until I ended my journey. With this in view I arrived in front of a rather stylish farm house. It was just such a house as a well-to-do farmer, advanced in years, and with abundant fortune, would build.

Around the house, far as the eye could reach, were smiling acres, and the grounds immediately about the dwelling were such as are usual in the country, not laid out with mathematical precision, nor with architectural beauty, as a millionare would have done, yet with excellent homely taste. The yard was filled with walks and flowers, and to the window lattice clung clusters of glowing roses. I thought certainly I would not be denied a meal here. I opened the gate, and, impelled by that cold deter-

mination, which is often mistaken for impudence, I entered the precinct of that seeming domestic paradise. I had no doubt of being able to get a meal for what work I was willing to do, as the quantity I might be required to perform cut no figure in my calculations in that direction.

As soon as I was fairly inside and the gate had closed upon me, a large and powerful dog, which I had not before observed nor had any idea from whence it came, sprang ferociously towards me. I have never been afraid of dogs. They have understood me at once, and there has been no cause of difference between us. I suppose that in this instance my general vagabond appearance had much to do with the prompt onslaught of the animal. I am confident that no dog, except perhaps the bloodhound, will attack a man if the man does not betray fear.

As the beast sprang at me I stopped, looked firmly into his eyes, spoke a few kind words to him, and went on my way up the yard to a side door, the dog following after me as though it were a pet, and I, the intruder, its friend and master. The dog was perfectly subdued, and I in possession of the premises.

Having rapped, I waited for some one to appear. The door was opened by a negro servant woman, who, with the door ajar, looked at me in a half-frightened way. When she had taken my appearance all in, an idea seemed to have taken possession of her brain, for she turned almost white—a sort of ashy paleness overspread her scared black face; her

eyes protruded, and her tongue for the moment was incapable of articulation.

When she saw, as she naturally supposed, a dreaded tramp standing inside the enclosure, even at the very door, her face turned a few shades ashier, and when she saw the dog so subdued, as though the hitherto faithful guardian and the tramp were old friends and understood each other, she became yet more ashy in hue.

After her bewildering astonishment had subsided a little, and the partial paralysis of her tongue had passed off, she rather thought aloud than addressed herself to the person who had upset and defied the propriety of the premises—

"Fo' de Lord its a mirkle dat dis yere dog didn't tar ye in pieces. It's de fust time dat er tramp d-a-r-d come inside dis yer fence."

"I do not fear dogs, Aunty; I only had to conjure him, and you see how friendly he is. Where is your master?"

"He—he—inside de house," she tremblingly answered, as though she feared being conjured as she thought the dog had been, "but he not gwan'ter see ye, kase he doan like tramps an pussons what won't work. You's lucky ef he doan have ye flogged," and she waited for me to go.

"Well, never mind what you think, just tell him that some one wants to speak to him."

The servant rolled her eyes up until only the whites were visible, and then gave a little feminine scream, meanwhile looking intently at me as if

uncertain whether it would not be best for her to run. Nevertheless, she started in search of the farmer, looking back over her shoulder as though she feared conjuration might overtake her.

Mr. Holden, for that was the farmer's name, being informed that a tramp was inside the fence, and not that some one was waiting to see him, made his appearance, and asked in wonder and amazement:

"Where is the dog—Tiger?"

The servant looked at me, then at the farmer, and jerked out:

"Dat tramp done kunjer de dog."

The farmer looked savage and hastened to meet me. His first salutation was—

"Get out of here, you vagabond! I'll set the dog on you and have you torn to pieces. At him, Tiger! Sieze him, boy!" but the dog could not be induced to move. He wagged his tail, thus acquiescing in my presence.

"What's the matter with the brute?" asked the farmer, "that he does not do his duty?"

The woman turned towards the irate farmer, her turban taking pantomimic action, saying, with some show of impatience:

"Dis yer man done kunjer de dog, I tole ye."

It was difficult to decide whether Mr. Holden was more angry with the dog or with me. However, his temper returned to him, spiced a little higher, and he commenced again:

"You miserable tramp, if you don't leave my

premises instantly, I'll shoot you dead where you stand."

I had been a patient listener so far, but thought it time now to get at some sort of an explanation, so I replied:

"And regret it as long as you live. You have made a mistake in some way. I fear you take me for one of those wandering marauders known as tramps. It is not so, and your dog, with better judgment than you have shown, discovered the error which my appearance produced. You observe how friendly he is?"

Tiger, as if to confirm my speech, came over to where I was standing and showed his good feeling by wagging his tail and rubbing his nose against my extended hand.

"Confound your cheek," exploded the farmer, with amazement in his face, "who are you, and what do you want? How dare you venture inside this fence?"

"Because I want to have some talk with you. I am a poor boy, and want a breakfast," hoping that my manner might appease him.

"Ah, that's it. Then you are a sneaking beggar, ready to carry off anything that may take your fancy—if it is portable. You are not a tramp then. I fail to see the difference. "I suppose that after you are gone we shall miss all the small articles that may happen to be within your reach?"

"You are wrong. I will work for what I get. As to what you may miss after I am gone, let me

say that you will have missed nothing but the opportunity to have been a gentleman, and of helping an honest boy on his way. As I explained to you I only want a breakfast, and I am willing to work for it."

The farmer glanced at me, but the look was tempered with the old determination to put no confidence in me. He seemed bent, in his ill-humor, upon adhering to the opinion that I was a vagabond. He answered with a sneer.

"Well, you can have a meal, and can go into the kitchen and eat with the nigger. I will give you as much as you can eat, and then have you chased out of the county."

"Not so fast, my friend," I replied to this, quelling my indignation, "we will make an exchange. I will do any amount of work for you in payment for my breakfast."

"Then, may I ask," said the farmer, his temper glowing forth again like a volcano. "If you intend to have what you want, and work for me too, whether I will or not," looking me over again angrily.

"Why, no; there is no occasion for that, since you have already decided that I shall do both," mustering up courage as I hoped that the thermometer of his temper was cooling off.

"Indeed, have I," he angrily demanded, "perhaps after you have eaten all you want you will kindly consent to take possession of my farm—become owner of it," fire flashing from his eyes.

"By no means," I answered, with, I am ashamed to say, a provoking smile, prompted by such an absurd idea, "but you see from my pertinacity that I am very hungry, and, indeed, starving. Now, the only difference between us is, whether you will let me earn the meal I am to get. I cannot eat what I do not work for, and that should convince you that I am all right. If, after I have finished my work you are not satisfied with the amount done, I will do more." Mr. Holden looked at me again, his brow knotted with anger.

"I see no other way of getting rid of you and your dogged impudence; so get what you want—do as you please, and then leave here as soon as you can—confound you," and he left me to the mercy of the colored woman.

I finished my breakfast, but not "with the nigger" as was suggested by the farmer, for she kept clear of me for fear that I might put some spell upon her.

"You jis' wait fo' a minit till I put yo breakfus on de table," which, being done, she made her escape, leaving me to help myself. I enjoyed the meal as only a hungry man could, but mixed with it were some bitter reflections, considering the gauntlett I had run to get it, and the bravado I had been compelled to exhibit in order not to starve.

I had finished my work and all was satisfactory so far as I knew, for I never saw Mr. Holden again. I was ready to go, but I had another ordeal to pass

through. I had not yet gone to the depths of humiliation. Just as I was going to the gate to resume my tramp, a young lady appeared upon the scene, standing in the doorway. She demanded, not in honeyed words, to be sure, but not with the undisguised ill-temper of the farmer.

"How dared you enter private grounds and take such liberties as you have taken?"

"I presume," I answered, with all the courage and politeness I could muster, at the same time wishing that the earth would open and swallow me. "I presume that you are the daughter of this house?"

"Answer my question," she said, in a gentler tone of voice, "why did you enter here?"

"I have already explained to your father, and he understands it." I faltered, completely abashed, my assumed bravado crushing me. She only looked at me the more intently, and I would rather have faced a dozen men like the farmer than rest under that stare she gave me for one moment.

"You wonder, and justly so, at the sublime impudence of my attitude here. For that, my only excuse is, that I am not what I seem. As to the intrusion, I could no more resist coming in here to ask for relief, than I can cease to breathe without doing violence to myself. I would not insult anyone, certainly not a lady. If I have done so, and I think I have, I humbly beg pardon. It is my nature to be just what I am, not what you take

me to be, what you deem the most brazen impudence, seemed to me to be only perseverance."

"It may be as you say," she answered, a great deal mollified, "but it looks to me to be a mild sort of ruffianism."

"I did not so intend it," I made answer, my face burning like a furnace.

"But who are you?" she pursued, with more interest, and in sweetly growing accents, "have you a name, a home, a country?"

"At present," I responded, raising my tattered hat, "I have neither. Even if you felt inclined to listen, I could tell you no more than that I am not a tramp."

So saying, I left the field to her, looking back, however, as I closed the gate behind me, to find her eyes following me. Walking away, I felt the rebuke administered by the young lady to be more of a punishment than if her father had thrashed me—as I deserved.

I had been irrepressible, had gained my point with the farmer, but it was a barren victory, and had the sting of self-disgust in it. I was yet a long distance from home, and, as I tramped along, I wondered what more I had to encounter on my road.

CHAPTER IV.

I FALL INTO BAD COMPANY.

I WAS never afraid of work or considered it degrading. On the contrary, I look upon labor as honorable, ennobling and of diciplinary value. My experience at the farm house had left a sting in my bosom, for there I had assumed to be a bully, and, indeed, had outbullied the farmer. It was not in my estimation a conquest, but a defeat, and it had further steeled my heart and aroused my resistence.

I was beginning to understand that, no matter what happened to me, I must be a man and take a man's part in the world—I was no longer a boy. I I was something of an athelete and could take care of myself on trying occasions. Yet, stung by the remembrance of my recent unseemly behavior at the farmers house, I sat down by the roadside in order to think it all out.

There I sat musing until the curtain of night dropped down over the landscape; until the darkness revealed the gleaming stars, and until absolute silence reigned, save the voice of the whip-or-will pouring its monotonous, senseless cry upon the night, wounding its solemn stillness.

My cogitations ended, I crept into the embrace of

a last years hay stack, sleeping as calmly, as soundly as a tired infant upon its mothers breast. The dawn of day sent the rays of the rising sun full and warm upon my trembling eyelids.

For the first time in my life I experienced the novel sounds of the awakening world in the country; the lowing of cattle, the singing of birds, the purling of brooks, and all those rural sounds, so grateful to the ears of dwellers in cities, struck my delighted senses, and there I lingered. Evening came on again. The sun was just sinking in the rosy West, streaking that distant part of the heavens with mellow rays of light tinted with veins of golden red, and merging into a twilight which was fast fading into darkness.

The next morning came and I started on my way, walking until the day was far advanced. I had left the road and was climbing the mountain steeps, arriving about night fall at the summit. Weary and sick at heart, I seated myself upon a high projecting point of rock, and there I sat in deep meditation long after the darkness had enveloped me. Not a sound was audible except the dismal hoot of the owl, and the crackling of dry twigs, as some animal of the forest crept stealthily along in quest of prey.

As my eyes suited themselves to the darkness, there shot out into the obscurity, from afar, a scintillating ray of light which soon broadened into a full flame, and then into the ruddy blaze of a camp-fire. Indistinct human figures flitted about

the fire, seemingly occupied, but so far below me that that they had the proportions of liliputians. Bent on investigating, I started from my lofty perch and made my way, guided by the shadowy light in the camp, down the mountain side. Dropping from crag to crag, sustaining myself now by a twig, now by the exposed roots of a fallen tree, I reached the bottom.

Working through the undergrowth, my feet became entangled in masses of wild vines, tossing me from my feet a number of times, and bruising me badly. Getting up again, I crept through netted underbrush, at the risk of tearing the skin from my hands and face, all accompanied, I fear, with a mild form of mental profanity. But I kept on.

After a struggle of this sort for over an hour I arrived at a point where I could command the whole scene, and where I perceived that I was close upon an encampment of vile tramps. Taking a quiet survey of the camp, and its crew, I was struck with the danger of my position. There was a gang of villainous looking fellows disposed in various attitudes of idling.

There was a tripod set up, with an iron pot suspended from the apex, which was actively boiling, and general preparations were going forward for the cooking of a meal. Fowls, corn and other provisions were lying about, all stolen of course, and on the coals beneath the iron pot was a sheet of tinned iron, upon which was an inviting looking corn-pone in process of baking. If the villians had

been made to decamp in a hurry, the whole outfit, exclusive of the stolen plunder, might have been replaced without a serious disturbance of their financial system.

It was too late to retreat, for they had perceived me, and I felt that now was the time to show my nerve if I had any, and so, bracing myself up against a natural fear in such a presence, I walked boldly in among them, sustained by an assumed air of bravery which I did not feel.

A gruff voice cried out.

"Who comes here?"

"A friend," I answered, not knowing what else to say, "one who would break bread with you."

"Are you one of us," demanded a burly fellow who proved to be the leader, "are you one of us?" and he looked me all over just as a horse Jockey examines an animal he is going to purchase

"That depends," I replied, looking straight into his eyes for effect, "if you mean to ask me whether I am one of those idle theiving vagabonds who roam over the country ready for anything from pitch-and-toss to manslaughter; who live by robbing hen roosts, who are afraid to steal except under cover of night, and who are too lazy to work, I answer, I am not."

I trembled while uttering this defiant speech, and expected, at least, to be hustled away with a broken head. It took the whole gang by surprise, and the leader remarked:

"We ain't none o' that kind o' men. We're

'spectable citizens. Aint we boys?" and there arose a deafening "Yes" from the whole gang.

"Kill him, kill him," shouted a dozen cracked voices, while an advance movement was made towards me by the crowd, as if they intended to carry their murderous threat into execution. But, seeing that I did not seem much disturbed by their attitude they halted, walked all around me, half pityingly, half admiringly, while I kept my eyes fastened upon them.

"Why, for a yung'un," said one of them approvingly, "he's got more gall nor a gypsy king—he's as bully as though he'd been on the road for years," and they all laughed boisterously.

"I say," chimed in another. "Lets roast him," and this seemed such a funny proposition that they all laughed again.

"Leave him to me," importuned the burly leader of the ruffians, I'll larn him not to come into our camp a-blusterin like he was a giant, an afore he's cut his teeth."

After delivering himself of this patronizing speech the head ruffian seemed to be enjoying in imagination the exercise of pounding me into a jelly, continuing in a jocular mood—

"Yung 'un aint you afeered?" and his fists instinctively doubled up.

"Afraid of what, such men as you? No, I fear none of you, any of you, all of you, for that matter. I saw your camp from a distance, and I came here

to ask for a supper, and a place to rest my weary limbs until morning."

"O, but he's a cool duffer, aint he," ejaculated one of the crew, more greasy than the others, and who seemed from the insignia in his hands to be the cook. "What a chicken purveyor he'd make now, wouldn't he," and he laughed immoderately at his own wit.

"We'll give ye the best there is to eat," promised the leader, but you aint agoin away from camp till I larn you a lesson by givin' you a lickin' accordin' to science, my bloomin' youth."

"Altogether," responded I, "you may do it. But you won't do it alone," and I stood on the defensive. "We won't, we won't, won't we, you bully boy" shouted the ruffians in chorus, "why won't we?" "Because it would be cowardly" I responded, "even to think of such a thing, and bad as you are, criminals, as you doubtless are, you would hesitate to attack a single man, unless it were to plunder him of his money, and, as I have none, there is no temptation for you, and I feel perfectly safe."

"Ye're a game 'un, I'm blowed if you aint," remarked the captain with some show of respect, but, continuing, said:

"I could chaw ye up, in about two minutes," and he glared at me as if he would like no better fun than mauling me to death and eating me afterwards.

"Perhaps so," I boldly answered, "but I promise

you that when you try it you may find yourself badly mistaken."

"Let's tie the brat up to a tree and lick the stuffen out'en him," advised one of the scamps, he's too fresh, we'd better pickle him."

I knew from unmistakable signs that the villians would soon work themselves into some devlish humor, which foreboded no good to me if I wavered. Indeed, the captain seemed about to give the word when I advanced, saying:

"Perhaps some of you who think me a forward youth would like to prove it. You are twenty to one, big odds, but if you promise to come one at a time I will engage to trounce the whole of you, one after the other, between now and to-morrow at dark, commencing with you, Captain." This was the safest proposition I could have made, for there might be a chance of escape between the acts. The hulking leader, stung into a generous sentiment by my assumed courage, scowled upon the lesser rogues, saying with a sneer and a look of contempt:

"Now, look-a-here fellers, no one musn't handle this here cub but me, and after I've taken the conceit out'en him I give you my word I'll lick any of this here gang that offers to insult him, let alone to hit him—ye hear me."

All agreed to this, per force, when, addressing the head bully, I said:

"How do I know but you may all jump upon me if I chance to overmatch you?"

"No," answered the champion, honor among thieves, eh boys?" appealing to the crowd.

"Yes, honor among thieves," shouted the boys, "besides, he won't be worth doin' nothin' to when he gits through your mill."

I knew it was a bold undertaking for a moderate sized man like myself, to stand up in a fistic encounter with a fellow whose prowess had been proven, not only in his own camp, but as I learned, whenever other bands of the same stamp had met him, and whose leadership had grown out of that fact—but there was no other way out of the camp.

I had received a pretty good training, was a fair boxer, was young, vigorous, was possessed of confidence and resolution, and, in addition, was backed by a physique which it took considerable to shake. I knew that my antagonist was a rioter whose strength had been impaired by drink, and other dissipation. Well, preparations were made, and we confronted each other as game cocks do when sparing for an advantage. The captain saying tauntingly:

"Now, my wictim, we'll try this thing on afore supper, and if I hurt ye much, we'll feed ye wid a spoon. If ye want'er give in afore I finish ye, jist holler, enough."

"Very well," I answered, and, turning my eyes to the excited spectators so anxiously awaiting my martyrdom, I asked:

"Can I trust you, one and all, not to fall foul of me, but let us two settle it?"

"Ye kin, ye kin," they shouted impatiently, "we aint no men to take advantage of a kid like you. So go it yung 'un."

Being so arranged, we, the combatants, put ourselves again in position. The tramps formed a ring about us.

"Now, yung 'un," admonished the brute leader, "look out for your peepers," and struck out as if certain of a short combat and an easy victory.

I stopped the first blow dexterously with my right, and, at the same time, planted my left under the fellows jaw, laying him flat upon his back upon the sod. This surprised him. But he got up, and, stung by the unexpected blow, rushed at me wild with excitement and anger. He was completely off his guard, when a stinging right hander square between the eyes, followed by the left just under the ear stretched the giant out again upon the sod.

The whole band of miscreants, dismayed, saw the bully done for. After fifteen minutes or so, he was put upon his legs, when he owned his defeat, shaking hands with me, and saying in a subdued manner—

"See here yung 'un you're a brick from bricktown. That's the fust time I've been licked since my good old father whaled me."

We shook hands again, and, to complete the bravado I was playing, I cooly inquired:

"Is there another of you who would like to punish me?"

They declined by making no response. Supper was eaten in silence, after which each one stretched himself before the fire, feet to the glowing coals, and slept—at least they did. I slept none of course, being on the alert for escape. Towards morning, sometime before dawn, I took advantage of the snoring tramps and slipped away.

I was glad to escape, for I felt certain that if I had to remain another day, or even until they were well awake, the generous spasm that they had been seized with would have evaporated and that I should be maltreated, perhaps murdered—who knows. After this I kept the high road until I got to my destination, not taking any more such chances as had brought me into the company I had just left.

CHAPTER V.

I DECIDE TO BE A SAILOR.

AFTER escaping from the tramps, and being only about twenty miles from Miss Searson's home, I concluded that the sooner I arrived there and adopted some plan as to my future, the better it would be for me, and the sooner I would get started on my career, whatever it was going to be.

It seemed at best but a poor prospect for me—the thought was constantly pressing upon my brain, the conviction was eating into my life that, ultimately, I should find my way into the forecastle of some ship, when my fate would be decided.

My firm resolution, however, should I become a sailor, was to stop at nothing short of being in command. To adopt such a course of life as a means of livelihood, and to remain in the forecastle all my life was no part of my expectation—anything but that.

I was glad to have escaped from the villainous crew, into which my curiosity had led me, with a whole skin. Although I possessed confidence and courage, I did not deem it a safe experiment to remain in their camp after such a victory as I had won.

I was sure that if I had remained until the day

dawned, and symptoms of coming daylight were streaking the East when I left their camp, the cowardly ruffians would have gotten over their enforced sentiment of generosity, created by my bold and defiant action, and revenge might have prompted them to dispose of me in some murderous way.

I walked away hastily, for I feared that they might follow in pursuit, and had gotten well rid of them, when all those sights and sounds of an awakening world in the country, of which dwellers in cities make poetry, came to my ears in a sort of melody. I had never before been in the country and those rural murmurings were a magic symphony—a music to which my soul responded.

It seemed to me, that in my gloomy retrospect, every occupation I had heretofore tried had proved a failure. What is called civilization and society were to my mind but trammels upon individual action, and hence hateful to me, and encouraged my resistence to everything but the sea. How could I ever reconcile my mind, I thought, to bear the chains which custom forges, and enter into such an artificial state of existence, as I deemed shore pursuits, as making choice of any land occupation—on this point my views have modified, experience has taught me the fallacy of such an idea.

This country life had awakened new dreams, the like of which I had not experienced between the walls of brick and stone which had bounded my vision in

the city. Those balmy days and starry nights, the forest, the wild flowers, and the mating birds uttering their love-calls from wooded depths, had given me a new inspiration—but the sea obtruded again.

I thought this all over, wavering in my resolution as to what I should do, the only result being a determination to return at once to all the home I had, and talk with my kind sensible friend Miss Searson. As the image of my dear mother arose before me, it was as if she waited in the home of the woman who had stood with me at that bedside of death which had left me so desolate. I made a rapid start for my destination.

I met with no further adventures, but proceeded on my way without again attempting to bargain my labor for bread. I had had enough of that, and of tramps also. When I entered the house my quaint old friend was rejoiced to see me again, but her face expressed some doubt at my coming without warning, as if she were asking, well, what has happened now?

I explained by saying: "My dear friend, I have returned without giving you notice because I could not longer endure the place, nor the man, to whom I had engaged myself. The fact is, that I am almost tired of life. Nothing that I undertake seems to prosper. Here I am, almost a man, and accomplished what? I want your advice."

"Well, my dear boy, you shall have it. But first tell me why you have left the place in which I thought you were so well satisfied."

"To tell the truth then, I did my work well enough but my heart was not in it. I suppose that my employer observed it, and fell into a habit of grumbling at me."

"Do you blame yourself in any degree?" she suggested.

"Y-e-s—I think I do."

"Well, that is wholesome at least."

"It was not active enough for me and I decided to leave there, and told him so. I asked him to pay me money enough to take me here, at which he commenced to abuse me, vowing that he would not give me any money, but on the contrary would compel me to remain, adding, that he would find means to keep me at work."

"And how did you get here without money?"

"Why, I took french leave in the middle of the night and tramped it. I secured my baggage, which is very extensive, as you observe" putting it down, "and here I am."

She smiled, asking, "And where did you eat, my dear boy?"

"Eat, why, I scarcely dare tell you and yet I must."

Then I told her all about how I had intruded myself upon the farmer, of how I had been taken for a tramp, of how I had won the dog, and of having blundered into the tramp-camp, and of the scene which had ensued.

"Ah, my son," she said, and her cork-screw ringlets trembled, "you have had a very rough

experience and a narrow escape. But tell me, did you stoop to any meanness?"

"No, on my honor, no, through it all I demeaned myself according to the teachings of my mother and yourself. Could you have seen me, even you, with your exalted notions of propriety, would not have condemned me."

"Yes, I am sure you did not lose your balance," she said, approvingly.

"For the meal," I continued, "which the farmer gave me, I did some work, such as he would permit me in his anger to do."

"But you must be very hungry now. Eat of what I have, as if it were your own—which, indeed, it is. After that you had better go to bed. To-morrow we will talk over what is best for you to do."

I ate my meal, almost choking with the knowledge that I had not earned it, and of how good and kind the dear old woman had been to me. I knew she had but little, and yet she was sharing it with me, who had no claim upon her except that which springs from pure humanity. And she gave me a comfortable place to sleep.

And what had I to offer her—nothing but the hope that some day I might be able to recompense her in accordance with the respect and love I owed her—which hope seemed to me to be a very remote one.

I fell asleep with these reflections. For a time, weary as I was, they drove sleep from my eyes.

Finally I dropped off into a deep and refreshing slumber, which lasted until the sun came peering into my little chamber. I got up and dressed, and, on seeking my benefactress, found her preparing our simple meal. I spoke first, saying:

"Good morning, can I assist you in any way? I feel so refreshed that I am equal to anything you may require of me—that I am able to do." I qualified the latter words because I was aware that the only thing I could have offered which would have been of use to her, money, I had none.

She noticed the sudden change in my spirit, and, also, the shadow that came over my face, and, divining the cause, said:

"You need not feel that way, my dear. I know what you would do if you could. If you had the wealth of Monte Cristo, I would be able to set up as a princess—I know that."

"Indeed you would, my mother," I replied with feeling, for what a kind hearted friend and mother you have been to me since the loss of my own. But what have I done for you? Nothing but share your scanty means, and give you a world of trouble with my vagaries."

"Don't think of it, don't think of it," she answered, looking at me as benign as an angel.

After breakfast, we sat down to talk. I opened the conversation by saying that I hardly knew what to do; that whatever I had undertaken on land had been a failure, because I really did not enter into such employment in a manner hearty

enough to accomplish results. Miss Searson looked at me with a sad expression, gave a preliminary cough, and said:

"I observe that your fancy for the sea still clings to you. You know that it is a hard and dangerous life. I fear you do not realize the constant vicissitudes which environ the life of a mariner; think of how many ships go to sea every year upon voyages from which they never return."

"Yes, I realize all that. I know that the life of a common sailor is one scene of insult, danger and drudgery. If I thought for an instant that I should remain a before-the-mast man, as sailors are called, I would cast all idea of it away from me, and take any position on shore that offered itself. But I have higher aims. I will attain to command, and then, it rejoices me to think of it, you will welcome me home and be proud of me that I have won the honor I covet—and which I feel equal to winning.'

"I hope so, my son, and I almost believe it. I will not attempt to dissuade you against your firm inclination for the sea. What I have done for you," she added, while tears welled up from the fountain of her affection, "has been done because I loved your mother, and because, too, I know you to have been a good and dutiful son, and," here she hesitated, "because you are now all that I have in the world to love and to live for."

"Oh, dear Miss Searson, how sweet and good that is of you," here I broke down completely, she con-

tinuing, and trying to look cheerful: "I am sure, also, that whatever you may set your heart upon doing, you will do in an honorable, straight forward way. As for me I have but a few short years to remain upon this earthly scene, and may not live to see your return, and enjoy the success I am sure you deserve."

"Oh mother, dear mother, do not say such things," I quickly answered, "it distresses me more than words can express."

Much more conversation took place between us, and it was afternoon before we had finished. Her well-stored and well-balanced mind offered advice and suggestions, which, during my whole carrer, were constantly aiding me. I never entered upon any undertaking, even when far away from her, that I did not recur with profit to the sound and practical sense uttered by the dear, gentle, lonely old woman.

It was decided then, with her approbation, since I would have it so, that I should become a sailorman. There were questions of what I should do and how commence, in seeking my desire to become a forecastle hand. First I thought of shipping in the Navy of my country. This, however, my sage advisor objected to, saying:

"How can you ever reach the command of a ship if you enlist in the Navy? You know that officers are made at Annapolis, to which Academy they are sent by political appointment. In that honorable service you can become only a petty officer—you

can get no higher. If you must go to sea, why go in a merchant vessel where promotion is a matter of merit."

Now, this was all so wise, so far seeing, and uttered in such a convincing tone of voice that I fell right into it—the truth came to me in such a crushing manner that it was conviction.

After looking about among the shipping for over a week and finding no berth, for I was only a greenhorn, I became very much discouraged, and so told Miss Searson every evening when I went home. One day I formed a resolution to make my first voyage on a whaling cruise. I was so full of this solution of my fate that I hastened to acquaint my benefactress of it, and secure, if possible, her consent to it.

When I stated the proposition she made no answer, but continued about her work as if she had not heard me, and I thought for a time that she had not. But, suddenly she turned toward me with a smile of approval, "Well, I think that is a good start to make," and, falling into thought again, enquired, "Have you selected a vessel yet?"

I answered no, that I had done nothing since the idea struck me, but to hurry home for her approval.

We had a quiet frugal meal, and sat talking for hours about my prospects, about what kind of vessel I would get, the officers, the length of time I should be absent, and many other things relating to

my welfare and comfort. After this, we separated for the night, going to our respective chambers.

The next morning we had an early breakfast, some more talk, and I started down town to find a vessel that was going on a whaling voyage. I hunted all day in and about the docks with but little success, going home late in the afternoon weary and disappointed. The morning after, I started again, going through the same experience.

Upon my return in the evening, at the frugal evening meal, I related the trials of the day, and the untoward events which seemed to surround me in my efforts to escape my dependence upon kindness and consideration. She refused to listen to such a view of my position, but encouraged me by more good advice, telling me to try again, and again until success crowned my efforts. The morning after I started again, going through the same experience

CHAPTER VI.

WHALES AND OTHER THINGS.

As I had now undertaken to be a sailor, and inaugurate my career on board a whaler with the desire and intention of ultimately becoming the captain of a merchant vessel, I felt it incumbent upon me to learn something about the great animal, the capture of which I was going to engage in. I began, also, to read nautical books with the intention of making myself acquainted with the principles of navigation.

Whaling, like other human pursuits, grew out of the wants and ambitions of mankind. It was a rude occupation early in the annals of the world.

History teaches us that the Greeks practiced it, and from that time, if not earlier, the capture of the whale was a part of the habits of almost every seaboard people. The time and locality when whaling voyages commenced is not within the memory of man with any exactitude.

In looking up the early voyages it will be found that the Biscayans followed whaling as a part of their commercial system. But, to fix upon any nation or people as being the pioneers in this arduous business, is to discount human industry, and to suppose that, all along the coast of the different

parts of the world where whales fairly teemed, the maritime population sat supinely looking on until taught by younger nations the value of the leviathan to be seen every hour of the day from their rude habitations.

Their needs, the spirit of adventure, and the dare-devil ambition of the human race taught those early peoples to rig up the requisite tackle, and invent new modes for capturing the monster which has, in these days, millions invested for its destruction.

Some time in the year eight hundred, to follow those who have investigated and written upon the subject, commenced the whaling commerce, descending to the present time with scarcely any improvement in modes of capture, except the invention of lance-throwing guns in place of the hand lance and harpoon.

King Alfred is said to have gotten information from the Danes, to found English commerce upon, who sailed along the coasts of those Scandinavian countries where whales were pursued and captured for their yield of oil—commerce then being ignorant of the value of whalebone.

At a certain time in the history of England, a branch of the king's revenue was the right to any whales which were caught, or cast up, on the coast and wrecked, as whales frequently are. These were called royal-fish, and were granted to the king in consideration of the protection given to the people against pirates and other depredators.

One of the curious parts of this right of the king to royal-fish was, that the queen consort became entitled to her share of this contribution from the sea, and the whale was divided in a whimsical manner. The king was entitled to the head, and the queen to the tail.

This unique division was devised, it is said, in order that the queen's wardrobe might be supplied with whalebone for her stays. If this were the object of the whim, and who dare question history, the stays of the queen must have lacked the requisite rigidity, if that quality depended upon her share of the plunder, as the whalebone of commerce is procured from the head of the whale and not from the body.

But what difference does it make to us, in these days of steam corset works and steel springs, whether the queen who lived so long ago as the time of royal-fish had any stays at all.

All of the early accounts of whales and whale fishing, are to a great extent the crude notion of those who observed without investigation; a mixture of fact, fancy, superstition, and a want of application of the simplest rules of judgment prevailed. Appearances were accepted as fact without investigation; the more ignorant the observer the more extravagant the statements.

Even the old style naturalist adopted marvellous accounts, given by hardy mariners, and gravely put many monstrous tales in their books as a guide for

future students; such stuff would have sent a modern investigator into a violent fit of contempt.

The whale fishery of America, I mean of the colonies which afterwards became the United States, began at an early period, as early as the time of Capt. John Smith, if not earlier than that period. The right of catching whales was granted by royal charter to certain proprietors of the Massachusett's Colony, and the first whale is said to have been killed by one of the inhabitants somewhere between 1660 and 1670—a wide range, ten years, for the statement of a fact.

About this time a violent dispute arose as to the ownership of a whale found floating adrift with a harpoon in it. This became very much of a question in the colony, even penetrating royal councils on the other side of the ocean.

It is quite probable that the loudest claimants were those who had never seen either a harpoon or a whale, or had any adequate idea of what either was like—however, I am not trying the case at this time.

Shore whaling was pursued all along the eastern coast of the Atlantic, mostly by crews owning a boat in common. This sort of whaling existed as long as whales were found in shore, within rowing distance for the boats, and was an enterprise in which much money was employed.

When the prey became scarce, shore fishing slacked off near the coast, and the industry took the form of deep sea fishing, the prows of

American ships ploughing the seas of unknown regions, indeed, to the very extremes of the world.

Along the coast of North Carolina, and further south, it is one of the customs among isolated communities, dwelling immediately upon the sea-shore, to own a boat and net as community property for the purpose of supplying themselves with fish.

A high stout mast is planted in the sand, upon the margin of the ocean, having cross pieces nailed at intervals to serve as steps. Up this mast, during the fishing season, some male member of the settlement ascends several times a day to observe whether the blue-fish are running, and, upon seeing in the distance the fish breaking the surface of the water into foam, and the gulls hovering over it, the neighborhood is apprised of the fact.

The blue-fish is a voracious and rapacious inhabitant of the deep, and when he strikes the small fry with his powerful razor-like jaws, hunks of the victim float to the surface, and that is the cause of the gulls hovering over the school of fish as it moves along through the sea.

When the lookout gives the signal from the top of the mast, that the fish are coming, the community is aroused and the fishing begins. A certain number of the men man the boat, the women taking an oar when men enough are not at home, and the net is set.

Others remain upon the beach to assist in various ways the general result. After the catch is over,

the fish are divided, each family getting an equal share, that is, so many per head.

This same system was in vogue on the coast to the eastward, when the lookout from the spar-top gave the signal that a whale had spouted, and then away went the boats, each striving which should get to the whale first. After the capture, the animal was towed to the shore, the blubber stripped off, tried out, and the profits adjusted among the participants.

The capture of blue fish upon the coast of North Carolina is annual, and the product of the catch is salted away in barrels for winter use, in the same way that inland communities do with the year's pork in the fall of the year. While it is a matter of necessity that the fish should be caught, it becomes not only a thing of utility, but, also, a very exciting sport.

I remember one of these community fishings near Currituck Sound, North Carolina, where old and young, male and female engaged in the capture. All was excitement while the run of fish lasted.

The boat was manned by both sexes, the sea was high and rough, and the launching of the boat through the surf was not without danger. On this occasion nothing worse happened than a drenching for the boat's crew. The scene was one worthy the pencil of an artist; in the boat was the crew toiling to get the net over the side, and, when filled, the bringing of the catch to the shore and landing it.

The old women and children picked the fish up

from the beach and piled them in heaps as they were tossed from the boat—each one doing his best to be efficient. Close to the sea stood a two-wheel cart, to which was harnessed, the harness being rope and corn shucks, a small horse known in that locality as a beach pony, looking as unmanageable as the wild horse of the desert, but really as docile and spiritless as a lamb.

The driver of the cart, Phely, a girl, stood just behind the dash-board, awaiting the requisite load to be thrown in, which was done without any regard to her feet and limbs. This girl was a beauty. A pronounced blonde with a complexion that would have been envied by many women living in the furnace roasted dwellings of cities, where the vitality of Heaven's pure air is completely burned out.

There she stood, her yellow hair streaming down her back, wafted seaward to return like golden harp strings to a neck and shoulders shapely and straight as those of a trained soldier. Her rich complexion was enhanced by the glow and exercise of providing for the family; on her head was a boy's straw hat, fit crown for such a queen, and the remainder of her wardrobe, well, to say the least, it was scanty—not to scanty, however, for that climate.

When the cart was loaded, and she started the pony across the beach, a strong breeze blowing in her face—it was a picture. What she had on, would not have passed muster in a social gathering in any

of the large cities; it was, I verily believe, nothing but a ten cent calico gown, disclosing, as the wind fitted it closer to her, a form divine—fit to grace the niche of fame. If this fisher-girl could have had the advantages of education and civilization she would have borne the torch of Cupid to matrimonial victory—if matrimony has any victory.

Well, I was talking of whales. But, somehow, I always wander off from my subject when memory reverts to the delights of such duck-shooting as is to be enjoyed in that particular place. There, for many years, I made an annual pilgrimage—that house on the beach was always a joy. It was an old-fashioned frame structure, situated upon the wide strip of land between Currituck Sound and the Atlantic Ocean.

It was surrounded—I wonder if it yet stands there—by persimmon trees from which the mocking bird poured forth its imitative power. There was a scattered growth of evergreen pines in contrast to the other trees. The house stood alone, no neighbors nearer than a half mile.

At night, out of doors, it was as silent as the halls of death; not a sound, except the deep bay of the house-dog. The wind murmured about the angles of the house, and through the branches of the trees, in dreary harmony with the roar of the ocean.

What a paradise that was. We hunted whenever the weather was suitable, amusing ourselves at other times in various ways—repairing boats, rig-

ging decoys, cleaning guns, loading shell, and making ready for a good day when it came.

We breakfasted about eight o'clock, deliberately, like Christians, then donning our shooting attire, proceeded, full of expectation, to the landing. Wading out to our boats laden with the implements of destruction, we started for the day's sport.

A small fleet of five or six sail start in a bunch like a flock of white-winged messenger birds; the swiftest of them shoot ahead, fading out in the distance; others disappear behind islands, or into one of the numerous small bays, and for that day we are lost to each other.

We meet again in the evening to show what murderous prowess our record will admit of. Tales are told around the festive dinner table, which, if related in the forecastle of a ship, would be consigned to the marines by general consent.

CHAPTER VII.

I SIGN ARTICLES.

At last, one day, when I was wandering about the shipping, admiring one ship for its smart appearance, another because I liked the looks of the captain, a third because I was much pleased at the jaunty figurehead and the taught and trim rigging —but none of these were whaleships.

Just then I saw swinging in the wind, like a jib sheet in a calm toying with fitful airs, a sort of banner with the following words painted in large black letters, "*Landsmen Wanted.*"

I stopped, read it again, entered a door which stood invitingly open, and commenced to make enquiries. The place looked like anything but a rendezvous for men who wanted to go to sea—it looked so trim, and prim, and all that.

There were some clerks inside of a wire fence, poring over account books, having in no respect the appearance of sailors. They took not the slightest notice of me, but kept on scratching away at the books as if it were of the utmost importance to finish what they were doing in such apparent hurry. There were some coils of rope, bolts of canvas, marine curiosities and such things lying about,

not exactly in confusion, and yet not with any attempt at order.

As I looked into the obscurity of the back part of the office, I saw emerging from the semi-darkness a man with a sailor-like air. He came rolling toward me as if he had left his shore legs in pawn when he went on his last voyage and had not yet redeemed them.

As he came forward he raised his fat hand to the brim of a hat, which looked as if it had gone through an experience of hurricanes and other violent weather, at the same time putting the question to me in an awkwardly polite and condescending way: "Do ye want to ship my young genleman?"

I thought him to be a very civil sort of a mariner, and yet, he acted upon my senses as if he were intended to be a decoy. However, I replied in a civil way:

"Why, yes, I have some notion of it." "Well," said he, "Ye can't do no better nor shippin right here in this here office. Why, I've bin twenty vyages, an' every time I likes it mor' en more."

"Where does the ship go and what is her name," I timidly enquired, hoping he might name some place of which I had read.

"Where do she go," repeated he, slapping his broad thigh with the flat of his great hand, "where do she go. Why, my lad, she be named the Peri, and do be goin down to the South Seas, where bread grows on trees and where oranges an fruits

is as cheap as dirt, and where the people don't wear no clothes—leastwise not much of any."

"Yes, I have heard of the South Seas."

"In course ye has. Arter yu've bin in them thar latitudes fur a few months yer har'll curl in ringlets like a bootiful woman, an' yer own mother wouldn't know yer."

"I apprehend" I ventured, "that its on a whaling voyage the ship is going."

"Right ye are, my lad, an there's a good deal more things as ye can't apprehend now, an won't, till ye gits down thar," and I imagined that he looked a trifle malicious out of the corners of his eyes.

After a long talk and many questions asked and answered, I agreed to sign articles. One of the young clerks came forward to the desk, his shirt collar as stiff as a foresail in a snow storm at sea, and laid the papers before me, which I signed, receiving in return an order for some pay and an outfit when I got on board ship.

I was now ready to start from New York, and was, consequently, obliged to say good-bye to Miss Searson.

The leave-taking seemed almost as much of a sorrow as that which came to me when my mother died. It had to be gone through with though, and I knew that the dear old woman would feel it as much as I—we should both dread it, but it was inevitable.

I was to take the train that evening. After we

had taken some light supper the agony came. Miss Searson tried to make out that she knew nothing about it, for she went on cleaning things that never had a speck of dust on them, and arranging others for the twentieth time that were in most admirable order.

I occasionally gave a funereal cough as though my days were numbered, and, in fact, we were the two most miserable persons in existence—I believed at that time.

Finally, I mustered up courage enough to say:

"My dearest and only friend and benefactress, it almost breaks my heart to leave you, who have been so considerate, so kind, so gentle, but I must go you know."

She stood like a statue, dear old soul, as if she neither saw nor heard. At last, coming to a realization of the truth, she broke out into violent weeping and coughing, saying between her sobs:

"Oh! I know, I know, I shall never see you again when once you are gone. But it is for the best. I will be with you constantly in spirit, and my prayers will ascend nightly for you: I will pray that you may be preserved, as well from the wickedness that you must encounter in the world, as from death away from me. Never forget, my dear boy the teachings of your mother: keep her in memory and you cannot go wrong," and with this she fainted dead away, falling upon the sofa with her pale face turned toward me.

I was too full of sorrow to have made any reply had she been conscious, and, feeling that she would soon revive, I kissed her forehead and her treasured ringlets a dozen times, made my way to the street and to the depot.

I was to sail from the port of Boston. I had never seen that city until my arrival there to join my ship. It seemed a queer old place, so full of colonial history, so quaint and colonial looking yet in places: one of the oldest cities in the United States, filled with memories of the Independence of our country: I enjoyed a stroll through the older parts of it, gazed with interest at its houses and curiously winding streets: its lanes and alleys, dignified by high-sounding names, which commenced nowhere and ended in the same place.

Late on the day of my arrival I found my way to the ship, which had not yet hauled out int the stream. The decks were lumbered up with all sorts of stores, such as implements of capture, boats, sails, coils of rope, and a great many more things which a whaler must be provided with before she can start on a voyage to those distant seas where only whales are to be found in our days.

The capture of whales in those times was replete with competition. Success depended largely upon skill, patience, perseverance and tact. In early times, indeed up to twenty years ago, the rudest instruments only were required to enable a vessel to fill up in a short time with oil and bone.

But now, the traffic has become much more

uncertain—it has become much more a matter of trained fitness and capital.

In place of the old harpoon and rude lances, fashioned by a blacksmith, often one of the crew, made it important to get pretty close to the animal sought to be struck, guns have been invented from which the irons are shot to a considerable distance, with as much certainty, perhaps more, than was done with such implements as were used in the early days of whaling.

The sailing vessel was at an early period of the industry, the only style of ship that ever started on long voyages, and arrival at their destination was a matter of much uncertainty, they having to contend with storm and calm, vicissitudes of weather, and often disaster.

In our days the traffic is changed to some extent, as steam vessels have been brought into requisition, thus enabling the money invested to go a straight course, comparatively, to the destined place of operation, to begin the onslaught long before the sailing ship makes its appearance.

There was so much being delivered on board the ship as to make it bewildering, to a greenhorn especially, even to look at, to say nothing of their uses. There were lances, buoys, oars, paddles, lanterns, boat-hatchets, grapnells, spare sails, foghorns, tubs for harpoon lines, buckets, canvass in rolls, compasses, boat anchors, rowlocks, harpoons, toggle-harpoons, boat-spades, harpoon-guns, bomb-

lances, and a mystery of things necessary to the capture of whales.

The boats were hanging to the davits, preparatory to stowing on deck, and the hold was packed with oil casks and such things as could not be carried on deck.

The ship was barque rigged, upwards of fifty years old, and staunchly built, though of a model long since obsolete.

It is something singular that many of the whaling ships now in the trade are very aged, ranging from thirty to upwards of eighty years, but as serviceable, except a certain rusty appearance and wear of rigging, as when they kissed the waters fresh from the ways.

This extreme longevity of whale ships is supposed to be the result of a calm and placid existence as compared to the merchantman. There is nothing like the wear and tear on a whaler, as on a vessel constantly sailing from port to port, loading, unloading, heavily canvassed, and under a strain of sail from one destination to another.

On the contrary, the whaler does not carry so much sail as a merchantman, is never in a hurry, a month or so in a cruise making but little difference in the general results. When on the whaling ground they are under easy sail, with nothing for the ship to do except to stand off-and-on, waiting for the boats sent out in pursuit of the prey, or to give the signal for return.

Besides all this, it is said and believed, that the

hull of a whaler becomes completely saturated with oil drippings, which add to its quality of defying time and the angry elements; to resist rot and other causes which soon end the life of a regular merchantman.

The Peri carried fore and main courses, lower and upper topsails, to'-gallantsails and royals, stay-sails, storm-sails, jib, flying-jib, spanker, and gaff topsail. She was rigged pretty lofty considering the period at which she was launched, but it did not take a clipper sailing vessel to overhaul her, or even keep in sight of her heels when the wind was blowing half a gale.

She carried under her bowsprit, between that and the taut rigged dolphin striker, a figurehead, an unusual thing now on American vessels, clad in a parti colored robe, hair flowing aft, eyes looking out over the ocean in search of distant climes, and round full arms stretched out as if to embrace the gods of ocean.

It would be a week before the owners were ready for the ship to sail, and, consequently, all who had joined the ship were kept busy at various occupation, half-land, and half-sea, labor; stowing away the stores and getting everything ready for hauling out from the dock and being towed to the lower anchorage off Minos light.

Our ship was what is known to the whaling fraternity as a three-boat ship. That is, she carried three whale boats for chasing whales, and a spare one called a gig. Her crew consisted of

Captain, first, second, and third mates, four boat-steerers, and about forty men, including, steward, cook, and two boys.

A crew of this size is enough to man the boats, and to leave hands on board to keep the ship standing off-and-on when a whale is sighted, and to get the boats out for pursuit as soon as the mast head hails the deck with "There she blows."

We were all ready now, the hatches were battened down, the anchor catted and the tug alongside. Arriving at the anchorage, far below the city, the anchor was let go, and the full sweep of ocean lay before us. We were to sail the next morning.

CHAPTER VIII.

OFF TO SEA.

THE ship was now ready to sail, the Captain had arrived the night before, having been detained with the owners. All was bustle and confusion, that is, it would have been confusion to a landsman, and was so to me of course. To those who had been to sea before it was all as plain and clear as the skies above.

The captain, Mr. Folsom, was a neat, clean built, sailorlike looking man who had been in the United States Navy, during the war for the Union, in command of a gun boat, and, for a whaler, was a bit of a martinet.

His complexion was fair, hair and moustache light with a shimmer of red when the light struck it aslant, ears small and fitting close to the head, nose large and full of character, and cheeks as red as the roses on the face of a blushing maiden.

He seemed about thirty-five years of age, and had been a whaling captain before the war, this being was his first voyage in his old business since he had stepped down from the quarter-deck of his late command.

He said but little, not being a talking man, and that little was straight to the purpose—everyone

understood just what he meant. No one doubted that as long as a man did his duty the captain would prove a very saint, but, any shrinking from duty, any "sogering," as sailors call it, would be sure to call forth a mild Satan to deal with. His make up, and especially his expressive face indicated the utmost determination—there was a lurking devil in his eye.

I was turned in all night, having slipped into my bunk in the forecastle along with the watch below, but of sleep I had gotten very little. I was awake when the cry came down the forecastle hatch, "All hands ahoy. Tumble up here my hearties to get under way." I had a distinct recollection of having heard the voice before, but not, as I remembered, on board the ship.

My surprise was very great when, I tumbled on deck, to see the sailorman with whom I had talked in the shipping office where I had signed articles, and who proved to be one of the boat-steerers, belonging to the crew with the name of Ben Bosun.

Whether this was his real name, or whether it had been given him as indicating his position at some time on board a ship I never knew—anyway, that is all the name he ever answered to as long as I was shipmate with him!

I bounced up on deck with the other men, although green and helpless, to make a show of doing something. I was appalled at the intricate entanglement as it seemed to me, of the rigging and blocks, and yards and ropes, and I felt at that

moment, that if I were ordered aloft I should be thrown into the sea for very fear—I had not yet began to feel the least saltness in my nature.

Breakfast was not yet ready, and all hands were standing about waiting for the word, I do not believe at that time that I could have eaten the nicest piece of plum pudding that was ever made. In a short time all hands were piped to breakfast, and all fell to, except myself—I was too completely sick of my venture to eat.

The captain, and the first mate, Mr. Ryder, were standing a little aft the waist engaged in a quiet conversation, carried on in a low tone, and in an earnest manner. The first mate had been in the Peri on her last voyage as boat-steerer, his present billet being a promotion. We all supposed that the two officers were talking of the ship, her sailing qualities, and, of course, of the crew.

It was mumbled among the men that the young captain was giving instructions and getting what information he needed concerning his new command. However, as the two separated, the captain going aft and the mate forward, the former was heard to say, "That is what I expect of the crew." I hope you understand me Mr. Ryder.

"Yes, sir," answered the mate, "I understand and will see that your orders are obeyed," turning half way round to make the answer.

The crew had its opinion, as crews always have, whether the captain was a sailor and ready to take his trick at the wheel if necessary, or to navigate

the ship in case of anything happening to throw the whole responsibility upon him.

But, after he had shown himself on deck a few times, he was accepted by the men as being all right. He was quite up in seafaring knowledge, and there was a snap in his manner that impressed the men with his entire ability. At the same time there was a lingering doubt in the forecastle.

As if to prove his position, after breakfast, eight bells, the captain came out of his cabin, Mr. Ryder being in charge of the deck, sauntered along a bit forward of the main rigging and looked out at the weather, then aloft, as if to familiarize himself with the look of the barque above the hull, when suddenly the order rang out from his lips: "Stand by to get under way." "Man the windlass."

"Aye, aye, sir," answered the mate, repeating the order. "Man the windlass, men. Heave away,"

The men sprang to their post and the pawls went clinking, as the barrel of the windlass revolved, to the music of a ringing song from the men. "Heave short," ordered the captain, looking at the mate, who answered, "Anchor up and down sir."

"Sail loosers aloft," and in a moment up the fore and main starboard and port rigging, active and sure footed as monkeys, went the men. As soon as they were up aloft the captain yelled out "Lay out and loose," and the sails were loosed from the furls and let fly.

"Get under sail, Mr. Ryder."

"Up with your jib and flying-jib, my livlies," sang out the mate, and continued, "Haul out the spanker."

"Break away," from the captain, and "Anchor away sir," answered the mate.

"Sheet home fore and main topsails," shouted the captain, and "Hoist fore and main topsails."

The ship had now gathered headway, when the captain bawled out:

"Hoist mizzen staysail." "Hoist maintopmast staysail." Set fore and main to'-gallantsails."

"Secure your anchor, Mr. Ryder." The mate responding from forward—

"All secure sir."

"Drop the foresail and mainsail," roared the captain. "Set main to'-gallant, and mizzen topmast staysails—Give her the gaff topsail." Then after a short interval—

"Set mizzen to'-gallant staysail." "Foretopmast staysail." "Set fore and main royals." "Brace the yards sharp." "Haul out fore and main bowlines." "Steady." "Keep her full-and-by."

Away went the Peri with the wind a little forward of the waist over the port side.

Now, indeed, we were off, and as the ship gathered speed, cleaving the water with about a five-knot breeze she hurled the sea under the dolphin striker into lumps of blue wave, crested with a creamy foam. The broken sea went rollicking aft along the sides of the ship with a murmuring sound

as if bent on meeting again abaft the rudder, and away again to meet some advancing prow.

All was bustle and excitement. Ropes were hauled taut and coiled at the feet of the masts under the belaying pins: boats were lashed more securely in their places: spare spars were lashed along amidships, and the ship snugged up generally. The mate gave the order to clear the deck of useless lumber and stowe it away, following with another to wash down and mop up the decks. The watch on deck turned to with brooms, buckets and mops to clean decks, and get things shipshape. This, with the working of the ship, took until dark, when we had supper.

It was my watch below and for the first time I began to feel that I was a sailor. I was already sick of it. The forecastle was just like the same den in other ships, and was by no means the sweetest apartment I was ever in. My bunk was but a sort of shelf made of rough boards, and the contrast between it and the snug and clean bed I had been used to in the home of dear Miss Searson was pityful.

I thought if I could only be transported to that, I would gladly seek some shore employment and be supremely happy—but it was now too late, there was no back-door by which I could escape.

I lay there listening, and could hear the water singing as it parted at the bows and went along the sides of the ship, as if distant chimes were singing encouragement to me—as if fairy cymbals were sounding under the ship's fore foot in honor of the beautiful figurehead, which stretched its arms out

toward seas which we had yet to reach. From the underside of the bowsprit she looked off into unexplored oceans, with a crown upon her head which may have been stolen from Neptune for all I knew—or which, perhaps, he had been despoiled of by the sprite at our bows, who wore it so jauntily, in some former liaison down deep amid the coral caves of ocean.

Then I remembered having read of Neptune, the God of Ocean. Of how the dolphin was the right-hand minister of that hoary old sea-god: of how the dolphin in his self-importance, aired his position among the denizens of the vasty deep, in and out of coral grottoes, calling on a mermaid here, visiting the royal domain there, to see if the juicy stalks of sea gardens were growing succulent enough to tempt the appetite of monstrous court consumers: anon, overlooking the royal oyster-beds to ascertain if they were more prolific than usual of pearls, that the custom-house might not be defrauded and the royal exchequer suffer, filling in the time inspecting the wrecks of vessels, and counting dead men's bones.

Of how the dolphin was, before men took to weaving deep-sea nets and pickling and preserving the finny tribes, a benefactor of mankind, and sent on errands of business, diplomacy and mercy: of how it visited sea-shores and bathing-beaches, where it listened to the stale vows of sea-beach lovers, and strains of music which came floating from summer resort dancing-pavilions: of how Neptune sent this

dispatch-boy, the dolphin, to assist a vessel in distress: of how the ship being a total wreck, the dolphin carried on its broad and ample back, sailor after sailor, to the shore: of how a monkey, a pet of one of the crew, instigated by a desire to save its own life, clambered down from the wet and slippery deck and seated itself upon the dolphin's back: of how the ocean-carrier started with humane intent toward the shore, but, somehow, on the way, the fish-rescuer was struck with the fact that the passenger was without shoes or clothing, and that it uttered no exclamation of fright, that the toes were clinging far too close, and were far too sharp for human toes: of how the dolphin turned to look at its freight: of how it discovered a monkey and not a man, and of how the dumb passenger was incontinently tumbled into the sea and drowned.

Then it occurred to me that there was a moral in this: that one should not attempt to pass ones self off for what one is not. And here was I passing myself off for a sailor, when I was only a land-lubber and sea-sick at that.

These reflections were broken into by seeing some one coming down the forecastle companionway. When the shadow was conpletely developed to my eyes and senses, I observed that it was the ship's carpenter, of whom I shall have to speak, at some future time. "What ails ye, my lad," he commenced in almost a womans' voice. "Air ye sea-sick?"

"Yes." I replied surlily, "and heart sick and every other sick."

"Well, don't ye never mind it, my lad, I was that ere same way when I just left home, but I'm got used to it now."

"Yes, I suppose so," said I, in a contemptuous tone. "You look as if you might get used to anything."

I had no sooner spoken these harsh words than I would have given worlds to have been able to recall them—I bit my tongue in vexation.

However, he did not seem to take offense at it, but replied in that same gentle voice: "Aye," and hesitating for a moment, "I'm rough lookin', ain't I? But I ain't to blame. This world's been hard on me, an I ain't desarved it." And turning away, disappeared up the companion ladder.

Sick as I was before of the sea, I was in a much worse humor with myself, for being so rude and insulting to a fellow creature, and a shipmate, who evidently wanted to be friendly with me.

CHAPTER IX.

BOXING THE COMPASS.

We had now been out from Boston about two months, and had experienced various changes and vicissitudes of weather—calms, light winds, half-gales and rain-storms; but, as yet, not a storm of magnitude enough to seriously disturb the working of the ship.

The old craft was lumbering along with all the speed there was in her aged ribs. The wind had changed and was coming steadily over the starboard quarter, the ship carrying all sail except the main course, which was hauled up so that the foresail might keep full. We were cleaving the water with a seven-knot breeze, or thereabout, as the lawyers say.

The men were scattered all over the deck, their pants rolled up to their knees, bare-footed and bare-legged, armed with mops, squillgees and brooms, cleaning up the decks man-of-war fashion. This was one of the pet means of our captain for keeping the men employed, and, as the crew thought, with a little too much persistency.

The decks were holy-stoned twice a week and washed down every morning as regularly as the sun showed the streakings of day in the east. The

captain was a strict disciplinarian, after the manner of a war vessel, and ordered everything done according to his experience acquired in the Navy. Whatever could be done in that way he so ordered, which caused a great deal of good-natured grumbling among the men.

It was not possible, of course, to have things on board a whaler, especially on deck, look as such things must appear on board a man-of-war vessel. All was quite different on this old tub of a whaler, which annoyed the captain very much. He seemed half angry about it and was constantly lecturing the mate in regard to it.

The sails were not so white and bird-wing-like, there was no uniformity of appearance among the men, their apparel looking as though it had been gathered up from a hospital where all the patients had died simultaneously. The sails were discolored and mended with other colored canvas, the deck was lumbered up with the trying-out kettle and spare spars; there was a woeful lack of that trim, taut and saucy appearance of an United States war ship; and the captain, his soul filled with unsatisfied discipline, groaned under it.

Sailors on whaling ships are rarely hurried when at sea, except in stormy weather, or when in pursuit of a whale. It is an easy-going life, except as above stated, and the men were not in love with such every day hurry. They uttered complaints to each other that they had no time to themselves.

There was not lolling enough to please them, and they grumbled.

However, sailors are chronic grumblers, and it is my firm belief, after many years experience as man and master, that if the angel Gabriel should descend to the deck of a ship and offer Jack the best berth at the right hand of the throne of Grace, he would growl because he could not have two berths.

I did not share in this feeling for the reason that my aim was the command of a ship, and anything that I was ordered to do, which did not cause me to lose my self-respect and feelings of manhood, was in my line, and I undertook it cheerfully, doing it with all my will, and in the best way possible for the amount of knowledge I had. This, then, in my mind was the shortest road to promotion—now, I am certain of it.

I had not yet been given any duty requiring much seamanship, but merely what could be called deck work. I was expecting any day as the ship went bowling along further away from home, that I should be sent aloft. Although I more than half wished for it in order to test myself, it was some time before this happened to me. One day, my watch on deck, I was standing along side Tom Krekit, whose trick it was at the wheel, who knew the compass as well as a mathematician knows the multiplication table.

Tom was trying to teach me how to steer and how to box the compass. He explained how it worked, the meaning of the various points marked

on the compass card, and all that. I could not understand, no matter how much he explained it. In fact, the more he explained the more incomprehensible it became—my brain seemed to be compass proof. I do not believe it was the man's want of capacity to impart what he knew, but my stolid want of comprehension on that point.

Tom Krekit was a patient man, who seemed to have taken a great fancy to me, and, after squirting a gill, more or less, of tobacco juice over the taffrail, would return to the charge and talk, while keeping his eyes alternately upon the sails and on the compass, after this fashion:

"Why, my lad," he would say in his gruff voice, "it's as easy as tellin' what's o'clock by ther face o' a watch."

"Yes, I know it is, Tom, to you, who have said it more times than you ever said your prayers, but I don't understand it at all. Perhaps, some day I may be able to box it with any man on the ship."

"O' course ye will, cause it's so easy," said he, and in a half whisper which was louder than his full voice, "an' don't give up, my lad, cause why, cause I'll larn it to ye. Come ter this here wheel when it's my trick an' try it agin."

I promised him I would and was going to thank him for the interest he was taking in me, when Mr. Ryder, the first mate, came up, looked into the binnacle-box, then aloft at the upper sails, the leeches of which were trembling a little, saying:

"Where are ye steering to, my man. You're two points off."

I could see at once from the change in Tom's face that he felt humiliated in the presence of the boy to whom but a few seconds before he had been an oracle. It seemed to me that there was going to be a jaw right there at the wheel.

Discipline is not quite so rank on board of a whaler as on board a regular trading merchantman, and often the men "talk back" in a mild sort of a way. Neither the mate nor Tom said anything for a second or two. Tom was the first to speak, saying:

"I knows how to steer, sir. I dessay I steered a craft long afore ye wus launched inter this here world o' ships and things."

"What's that?" quickly asked the mate, looking angrily at the man, "what's that you say?"

"I ses, Mr. Ryder," so respectfully as to mollify the mate, "I ses, as how I stood at the wheel afore ye wus borned. An' I 'low as I means nothin' onrespecful, but I differs wi' ye about steerin' an' all thet. I 'low now, thet I kin box the compass better nor you kin box the Lord's Prayer, an' leave this here yungster to dercide atwixt us."

The mate saw the humor of the thing at once, and agreed, saying to me:

"Quickstep, you can decide."

This frightened me. I knew the prayer better almost than I knew my own name; but the com-

pass, that was where my deficiency lay, and, looking at Mr. Ryder, I said:

"I hope you will excuse me, sir. I am perfectly competent to decide on the prayer, but on the compass, why, I haven't yet learned to read it."

"Well," inquired the mate, becoming more and more interested, "how can the thing be decided?"

I wanted to see the fun and promoted it all I could, addressing Tom, saying:

"I'll tell you what, Tom. I'll decide as to the prayer, and let Mr. Ryder judge whether you box the compass ship-shape."

"I'll stand by Mr. Ryder on my readin' o' the compass," agreed Tom.

All this time we were standing in a bunch at the wheel, our conversation being in a subdued tone which could not have been heard ten steps away. Had it been known on deck and in the forecastle that this sort of a contest was going on, the watch below and the men on deck would have been making themselves busy at something near the wheel.

"All right," said the mate, "who shall commence? You, Tom?"

"Aye, aye, sir, I'm agreed," and Tom commenced giving the points, half and quarter points, deliberately, but without hesitation, ending with "How's that fur binnacle edicashun?"

"As well as ever I heard it read," answered Mr. Ryder, "sailor-like and prompt."

"Mr. Ryder," I inquired, "could anyone do it better?"

"No," answered the mate, "it's as good as I can do it."

Tom looked at me with a wink of triumph, a satisfied smile spreading his thick lips and disclosing a set of large teeth, once white, doubtless, but now stained with years of constant tobacco chewing.

As there seemed to be considerable equality, for the time, just there at the wheel, I spoke up, saying:

"Now, Mr. Ryder, it's your turn, and please remember that those are sacred words you are going to utter."

The mate made no reply, looked serious as if he felt that this part of the contest must have no levity attached to it, and commenced saying that beautiful prayer, known, it is to be hoped, to every language in the world, to the ignorant as well as to the educated.

When he had finished, it having been said in a reverent tone, full of the rude pathos of a sailor, Tom anxiously enquired:

"Now, my lad, who boxed his part the best?"

"Mr. Ryder," I responded, "says that your boxing of the compass was as perfect as ever seaman did it."

"Aye, aye, my lad, an' how'd Mr. Ryder box the prayer?"

"Perfectly," I answered, "I never heard it said better."

"I 'spose as how he done it right, 'cause I 'spose he's a Christian man. Then, ye dercide thet we're eq'al."

"Yes, that's it," I answered, very much relieved.

"Awast there, shipmate," said Tom, emptying his mouth over the taffrail again and putting a fresh supply of tobacco into his cavern of a mouth, "I ain't done yit," and commenced boxing the compass backwards, and finishing, demanded:

"Now, let's hear Mr. Ryder box that ther prayer backwards."

The mate owned up that he couldn't do it, and walked forward with a good-natured smile playing about his lips. Mr. Ryder never mentioned the matter again, nor ever looked as if a joke had passed between us, and so equality was at an end.

After the mate had gone forward, Tom spattered the taffrail again with the contents of his mouth, and turned to me, saying:

"Ye see, Johnnie, ther perfesh'un uv a seaman an' ther perfesh'un uv prayin' is two defr'nt things. Ryder 'ud get the ship more pints out en her course a steerin' by that ther prayer, nor he thot I wus goin' off wi' the compass."

Just as Tom said this, and was preparing to let off some of his sea philosophy, the mast head hailed the deck with:

"Sail ho!"

"Where away?" asked the mate.

"On the port quarter, sir."

"What does she look like?" turning to one of the boys and ordering him to call the captain.

"Can't make her out, sir; she's hull down, but

the speck I see looks like the skysails of a large ship."

"Well, keep a look out."

"Aye, aye, sir."

The captain came out on deck with his binocular and walked up to the mate. Both took a squint at the speck on the horizon, discussing what she might be. The men gathered in the port, midships, straining their eyes to see what the masthead had sighted, but nothing could be seen with the naked eye from the deck. The lookout hailed again with:

"She shows skysails and royals, sir. She's comin' right after us, t' won't be long afore she'll overhaul us, if this wind holds."

"She's a big 'un, whatever she be," said Ben, as though his opinion had been asked.

"Yes, I judge so," answered the captain. "She shows skysails and her upper to'-gallantsails are fast appearing."

"I'm thinkin' she's an American trader," ventured the mate.

"She may be," replied the captain; "anyway, she'll be overhauling us before sundown. From the look of her upper canvas she's one of those big down-easters, carrying four masts. Captain Folsom started to walk, but on a sudden, as if some thought had occurred to him, he turned and continued pacing from aft to the windlass and back again, often eyeing the approaching vessel through his glass.

The coming ship had speeded along so much

faster than we had any reason to expect that the sails lifted out of the horizon one after the other, showing courses down to the rail, the great hull looming up and forming one of the grandest sights ever witnessed on the ocean. She was under a press of canvas as white and spotless as the linen of a dainty woman fresh from the laundry. She came sweeping nearer to us, breaking the blue sea into silvery froth tinged with the shadows of the falling night.

The vessel proved to be a square-rigged four-master, carrying courses, lower and upper topsails, two to'-gallantsails, royals and skysails; flying jib, jib, and foretopmast staysail. With the swing of a giant she passed us, with the wind right over the quarter and every yard of canvas full of a driving breeze, the heavy bows breasting the waves with a heave that sent the sea flying up over the to'-gallant forecastle.

She seemed from our deck to be about three thousand tons, with a sweep of deck of about three hundred and fifty feet, the break of the poop reaching near about half way forward from taffrail to knight heads. On the forward house were lashed three boats ready for any emergency. She had a to'-gallant fok'sle, the masts raked pretty well aft, with jibboom, and staysailboom at an upward angle; the beam somewhere about sixty feet, and depth of hold—well, who could guess without fathoming it?

A guess was made as to her tonnage, and the cap-

tain and mate fixed it at about three thousand tons, with a spread of canvas that would have taken all the mills of fifty years ago to manufacture. She carried no figure head, but a simple scroll under the bowsprit American fashion. As she swept past us we observed the flutter of petticoats on the poop-deck, supposably the captain's wife and a female passenger. However, that was no affair of ours.

To see such an immense ship as was now leading us, under a full spread of canvass, is to witness the poetry of motion—a motion fit to inspire the poet and the painter. Shore people can never enjoy the spectacle unless they go to sea, and sea-farers rarely see their own ship unless some accident happens and a part of the crew is obliged to go off in boats distance enough to do so. When such a sight is seen, by either seamen or landsmen, it is with a kind of awe, as it comes to their vision overtopping the ordinary-sized sailing craft.

It was a little before sundown when she went sweeping past, as though we were at anchor, like the queen of the universe on a voyage to claim the confines of earth. When she was about abreast of us the captain ordered the mate to speak her. Mr. Ryder jumped into the main rigging and hailed—"Ship ahoy!" in stentorian tones, and there came back across the mingled blue and foam of the rioting sea.

"Ahoy, what ship is that?"

"The Peri, whaler, bound for Cape de Verde Islands; what ship is that?"

"Susquehanna, bound round Cape Horn for San Francisco."

And that immense hull dashed away from us, dressed in robes as white as woman's purity, over seas more boundless than their unfathomed depths, more limitless than the mind of man can conceive.

With the stars and stripes flying from the jigger gaff the Susquehanna passed away from us, under the canopy of heaven studded with stars, on her way to the Pacific, her prow lashing the ocean into blue and silver, and sending along her copper glowing sides the parted waters, which fade out away aft into threads of lace-like texture. The giant ship glides like a phantom from twilight into falling shadows, her white wings fanning her into darkness where she disappeared in a haze of canvas and evening twilight.

CHAPTER X.

I GET ACQUAINTED WITH THE CARPENTER.

AMONG sailors of every nation and of every age, living, as they do, the greater part of their lives upon the ocean, there is a mysterious prompting to superstition, which comes to them, caused by sounds and appearances, that they are unable, with their limited understandings, to account for.

Their modes of thought are necessarily narrow, and whatever they cannot readily comprehend is endowed with supernatural attributes. It is fair to suppose that every one of them had a loving mother who watched over their infancy and boyhood; and yet many of them are lower than the fourfooted animals to which man is supposed to be superior.

Cut off from social contact with their fellow-creatures, learning the lesson of life within the narrow limit of a ship's decks, with no education except what they got at a mother's knee, exposed to rough treatment, bad fare, and ever present danger, many of them are daring and wicked enough to cut a throat or scuttle a ship, and yet, inexperienced enough to a degree that impels them to put implicit, almost childlike faith in all the signs and omens which are a part of every ship after her first voyage.

They believe in demons of the deep and all those

superstitions which are among the contents of every seaman's chest, and which, when he ships for a cruise in another vessel, he takes with him, as a part of the lore to be exchanged with his brother tar, adding to their stock what he has to contribute, and receiving from them what he has not yet learned, all of which is absorbed as certainly as a drowning man grasps whatever is within his reach.

Jack's imagination, fed on such stuff as he finds floating in the atmosphere of the forecastle, creates kingdoms beneath the blue and restless waves, and whether sailing over the vast expanse of waters in search of adventure, conquest or plunder, it is the same.

Is it any wonder, that with his scant vocabulary, fashioned after the details of his every-day existence, the forecastleman should believe what no one has taken the trouble to teach him the fallacy of: is it any wonder, that, standing amid the angry elements, looking out into the storm and darkness obscuring the billowy waste, he should conjure up evil spirits and intangible terrors in the shape of monsters, gods of vengeance, and syrens luring ships and mariners upon unseen rocks to destruction?

Is it any wonder that Jack believes in Davy Jones, the fiend who owns the evil spirits inhabiting the vasty deep, who lets loose death and destruction, riding upon the storm and sweeping good and bad alike, into the abyss of waters?

Is it any wonder, that not understanding it, he is inspired with an awe not springing from his religion,

as he walks his solemn watch in the dead of night, the moon tipping the wavelets with silver radiance: as he looks out watching the waves when they come dashing against the prow, leaving it crested with mingled threads of foam and spray, flattening out in a wake of delicate tracery-lace, woven by unseen spirits from the depth of the ocean?

Is it any wonder, that he hugs superstition to his bosom when he experiences storm and tempest, shattered masts and ribboned sails, with but a plank between himself and Davy Jones' Locker, and sees successions of mountainous waves sweeping the decks, and roaring messages of disaster, shipwreck and death?

The sailorman many not have an aesthetic soul, but from the very loneliness of his life, he is filled with poetic awe which his limited vocabulary cannot give expression to. He hears the light breeze wafting its music over the decks and through the ropes, stirring the sails with magic touch. White rippling waves speed along the sides of the ship, whispering tales of fairy islands, of coral groves, of sea gardens with waving palms of ocean growth, plants of variegated hue, monsters of wicked mien, arches of alabaster purity, such as architect never builded, human eye never beheld, nor human intellect ever comprehended.

The crew of a ship, picked up here and there and everywhere, as it is, forms one of the most curious studies imaginable. The men comprising the crew of the Peri was no exception to the rule—there were

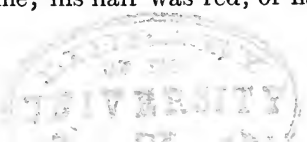
good and bad: men whose better instincts had been eradicated by the rigors of sea life: men whose early life had been spent with loving companions in the domestic circle, and who wanted but half a chance to return to the sweet precepts of home, and men who had resigned themselves into the toils of the devil, and to whom hope was an unknown word.

Ned Ricks was the man who came into the forecastle and stood at my bunk when I was disconsolate. He was a curious physical compound, and seemed to have been made up of odds and ends, as it were, all of which gave him not only an incongruous look but a sinister one.

He stood about five feet eight inches, not powerfully made, but sinewy and strong as a lion, which strength, however, was never exerted except in the line of his duty. His language was about the same as that of other sailors, except, that he never spiced it with profanity, he having had otherwise no advantages of education over his fellows.

I am going to be very precise about his personal appearance, because, from the time I joined the ship he evidenced a friendship for me, determining to be my friend, even after I had on several occasions almost driven him from me.

As I said, he stood about five feet eight, and one leg was something longer than the other, the longest one bowing out from the short one as a sort of compensation in locomotion; he had but one eye, the other he had lost in some way not discreditable to himself, as he told me; his hair was red, or had



been before it came out, and what was left of it formed a ring extending from one ear to the other, leaving the entire top part of his head as smooth and polished as a mirror.

His skin had been fair, as the color of his hair indicated, but it was so covered with great black freckles, and so tanned and weatherbeaten as to be about the color of seasoned mahogany. From his appearance the crew, to a man, had taken a violent dislike to him, and, in a short time after the ship's company was mustered he was shunned—merely on account of his untoward appearance. Some one of the men, with that aptitude that boys and sailors have for finding one's weak spot, had nicknamed him Old Baldy.

Ned Ricks was a sensitive man for one whose life had been passed in the rough-and-tumble chances of the forecastle. He knew he was not like other people, that he was ill-favored, about half made up, and, consequently, he was reserved, shy, keeping himself aloof from his fellows as much as possible. There was something about his whole appearance, even to me, uncanny.

His baldness was peculiar. It was not so much that he was bald, as that when his head was uncovered, which happened only when he turned into his bunk, or when a sudden gust unceremoniously lifted his hat from his head, his face had, somehow, the appearance of a corpse waiting to be placed upon a grating and launched overboard.

Besides all this, if the mast cracked, as it felt the

weight of the wind and sails, it was an omen. If St. Elmo's fire appeared on the yardarms, or trucks, it was an omen, and so on through all the infinitude of sights and sounds known to sailors who believe in such things.

Despite all these drawbacks, as I became well acquainted with him, he was to me honest-hearted, upright, sincere, sensible and honorable; altogether a man to make ones heart rejoice to have for a friend.

One very singular thing, which I have hitherto omitted, considering his general deformity, the rough life he had lived, the gales and hard usage he had gone through, was, that his voice was low and sweet, having somewhat the tremulousness of a woman's.

Since the time he came down into the forecastle, when I was discouraged and sick of life, I had never ceased to regret that I had been so uncivil and unmanly to him. Having completely recovered from the cowardly spell which actuated me at that time, I had resolved to stand up like a man to the life I had chosen. Since that resolve I had been taking an intense interest in the working of the ship, and in everything pertaining to seamanship. As yet I had not been put to do anything very hazardous.

One morning, about four bells, A. M., I was standing a little aft of the main rigging and looking out over the port quarter into a darkness so dense that

it completely enveloped the ship. The Peri was leaving a streak of fire in her wake; nothing was visible in the heavens except the stars, so far distant as to seem like tracings of planished silver worked upon a ground of celestial blue.

Ned and I were in the same watch, and of course both on deck. I saw him last, up forward, sitting on the windlass as motionless as a statue. We were booming along, with a good stiff breeze coming over the starboard quarter, and with everything braced taut to port.

Not a sound could be heard save the cat-like tread of the watch, the creak of the wheel as the steersman turned the spokes a port or a starboard; the chafing and straining of the rigging, the rattle of a block, the rippling sound of a slack rope playing against a spar, and the washing sound of the sea as the speed of the vessel tumbled it into froth and bubbles.

I heard the sound of bare feet pattering lightly on the deck, and, turning, met Ricks square in the face. He accosted me in his gentle voice.

"How aire ye feelin', Quickstep, I hope ye 're a feelin' better nor when I see ye in the fok'sle?"

"Yes, thanks, Ned, I am in a better mood, and determined not to get in the dumps again. I am very sorry that I treated you so badly when you came to my bunk, and I want to tell you so."

He said nothing for a few seconds, and then answered:

"Don't mind it, my lad. I'm used t' it. Ye see,

Quickstep, I don't lack sense; what I mean for to say is, that ere kind o' sense as comes o' experence an' not o' edicashun. I ses, I'm a odd lookin' bein', and no' b'dy don't keer for me. Cause why? Cause I'm not made up to the likes o' other men, an' they langhs at me," and here he hesitated awhile, but continued in his soft voice:

"But, my lad, I've a heart as is true blue, an' I wants to be yer friend."

"I want you to be my friend, Ned," I answered, struck with the kindness of his manner, "for you know that I am only a greenhorn."

He took one of my hands between his great palms and pressed it with more feeling than could have been expressed in words, though those words were uttered with all the eloquence of studied rhetoric, saying:

"Ye'll want 'er friend afore this here vyage is up, belike."

This was said so quietly, so gently, that the creak of a single block, the rippling of a sail would have drowned it. I listened and wondered what freak of nature had created this man's make up, so ungainly, so hideous even, but so fully compensated with a bird-like voice, and so at variance with the lifetime experience he must have had.

"Thank you, Ned, for the interest you take in me," I replied, "and I accept you for a friend with all my heart. There is so much that I don't know, and that I must learn, in which you can assist me."

"Why," he answered in a pleased way, which I

could only guess from the tone of his voice, for I had never seen the grimness of his features relax into a smile for a moment, "I kin larn ye all about er ship from keelson to royal masthead."

"I am sure of it," I answered, when he continued, "I ain't agoin' for ter say nothin' agin' no b'dy, 'cause that's not me. But there's many a man aboard er this here craft as don't know the foreroyal-stay from the foretopmast-stay, nor the keelson from the foreroyal-truck."

"They can learn," I suggested.

"Yes, o' course they kin larn, an ef any on' em gits in trouble, I ses, let 'em call on Ned Ricks an he'll git em out."

And so we used to chat and yarn every night when we were on deck together, and it was not long under such training before I knew every rope, every sail, and every stick and spar in the ship. But the compass puzzled me, and we walked up and down the deck discussing the mystic compass and other matters.

"Quickstep," commenced Ned suddenly, as if an idea had struck him, "ye ain't bin aloft yit, heve ye?

"No, not yet," I answered; "but I shall not mind that, I can do that well enough after a few trials."

"In course ye kin. It's as easy as goin' up stairs in a house—when yer used ter it."

"Oh, I can do it," I said, with much confidence, though not more than I felt, "but what puzzles me

most is the reading of the compass. I cannot understand it at all. Tom Krekit has been trying to teach me, but my head is as thick as a butcher's block."

"That's the easiest part o' sailorisin' I ses. Jes begin at nothe, and keep goin roun till ye git nothe agin: an then ye takes yer half pints, an yer quarter pints, an thair ye are."

"That's the way Krekit said it," I answered, "and I suppose I shall learn it—I will learn it."

We had many talks over the compass and its difficulties to me, on our night watches, Ned always insisting that it was, as he so often expressed it, "as easy as eaten o' a plum duff."

One day the second mate, (it was his trick at the wheel,) was trying to make me understand the mysteries of the binnacle-box. He turned the wheel down two spokes, and turned it back one, alternately looking at the card and up at the sails, with an occasional glance astern, when the whole thing came to me like a flash—I saw the working of it as if by inspiration.

I remembered never to have been so much gratified before but once, and that was after months and months of effort to tell the time of day by the clock. That too, came to me, just as the secret of the compass did, while standing with the second mate.

I was overjoyed and fairly danced with excitement. As soon as I was relieved I ran straight to tell Ned of my progress in "sailorisin," as he

called it. He was as much pleased as myself over it. He was engaged worming a rope, and when I told him of my success, he dropped his work, put his left hand upon his left hip, then put the other hand on his right hip and broke out into extravagant praises, saying:

"I know'd ye'd larn it. I know'd ye'd larn it, cause yer's a lad o' oncommon sense." Just then the mate came up and ordered him to some other duty. He went off, his grim face not changing a muscle, repeating, as long as I could hear his voice, "I know'd ye'd larn it."

Ned Ricks and I were companions whenever we were on watch, and I further learned from his conversation that he was full of the superstitions of the sea. He knew all the sea lore which sailors trade with each other. Indeed, I may say that he was learned in all those things which shake one's common sense when one becomes a seaman—if one is not pretty well balanced.

One morning, right after breakfast, when we were all engaged washing down the decks and looking, in our ragged, patched and variegated clothing, as if we had just escaped from some correctional institution, Ned asked me in a lower tone than usual:

"Johnnie, did you hear them gulls last night over the main-mast head."

"No, I heard nothing, what do you mean?"

"Why, I allow thet when them ere gulls is a flying to the shore it means there's goin ter be

a shipwreck, or a accident. An when ye sees em a-settin on the water a-chatterin an a-chatterin, an flirtin' the water aroun' ther'll be somethin what's onnatural. I hearn 'em last night when we was a talkin by the corner o' the galley, an afore many days som'thin i'll happen." He said this in his quiet way, and went on with his work.

That set me to thinking, and then I remembered reading somewhere :

> "Seagull, seagull, sit on the sand,
> It's never good weather when you're on the land."

Then I repeated it, and asked Ned if he had ever heard it.

"No, I never heerd it, but I knows as ther'll be som'thin' happenin' when the gulls is goin ashore, and I heerd 'em a flyin' across the ship over the top-mast head."

Of course I never believed such stuff, and yet it is a difficult thing to divest one's mind of a certain amount of belief, especially when uttered with all the appearance of honesty, as Ned uttered it. The day after this conversation, although I laughed at him, there did something happen.

All at once the cry rang out, "Man overboard."

Now, that cry is one which penetrates at once to one's very marrow. It is a cry of despair, ringing from one end of the ship to the other, meaning that a shipmate, one of God's creatures, has been hurled into the ocean there to battle for his life.

I know of nothing that equals the intensity of the cry "man overboard," except the one of

"Fire!" sounded on shipboard. Poe's description of the-fire bells is akin to it, where each clangs out that the devouring flame is leaping higher, higher. In reading it one can almost hear the crackling timbers, and see the homes of startled dwellers melting away before the fork-tongued demon whose appetite is only appeased in the ashes of consumed human habitations.

The captain sprang out of his cabin at the cry, and all hands were on deck in a moment looking aft; the captain shouted the necessary orders, and every man was at his post.

The life-buoy was let go, the helm ported, the boat cleared away, the courses hauled up, the foreyard hauled aback, heaving the vessel to. The boat was over and manned in a few moments, the men putting all their strength upon the oars. Inside of a half hour the man was brought on board with nothing worse than a bad fright and a wet jacket. It appeared that a seaman standing in the main chains, more for bravado than for anything he had to do there, lost his balance and tumbled into the sea. He confessed that he was much frightened and thought he was a goner.

The helm was righted, the courses let down, and as the ship fell away the yards swung around, the helmsman meeting the ship to the trim of the sails. This occasion was the first one on which the captain showed what he might be capable of in the way of discipline. As the man alighted on deck, the

water dripping from his clothing, the captain roared out :

"What were you doing out there, you lubberly *matelot?* Why were you not on deck doing your duty? I've a great mind to make you straddle the fore to'gallant yard for half a day," and calling for the mate he ordered :

"Mr. Ryder, punish this man; put him where he cannot see the deck for a week," and walked away to his cabin.

After the excitement was over, Ned approached me, saying:

"I told ye somethun was a-goin ter happen—didn't I?" The last words were added as if he had some doubt of whether the accident was grave enough for a convincing example.

"Yes, you did. But it was nothing—a good wetting, and touching the captain's temper off—the man was not drowned, and had a good swim."

"He might a bin drownded, only there wasn't gulls enough flew over the mast-head," replied Ned.

CHAPTER XI.

THE COOK'S MONKEY.

PROBABLY the strangest thing that ever happened, in making up a crew, was the shipping of a monkey on board of the Peri. Jabo was the name of the monkey, and it belonged to Pedro the cook.

It was of the ring-tail species, which has the power of hanging by its tail, just as though it had another hand, thus rendering it capable of using both hands while holding on by its prehensile member. The animal had been brought from some port where the cook had been, when it was a baby, and had become a pet which its master could not live without, it accompanying him wherever he went, on land or on sea.

The shipping master, making up the crew of the Peri, refused to let the monkey go on board ship, and Pedro as persistently refused to go without Jabo. So the matter stood until it was agreed, for the cook was well known to the whaling fraternity as a first-rater, that he might take his pet with him, and in this way Jabo became a part of the crew, and entitled to his rations.

The cook was a full blooded-negro, born somewhere in North Carolina, and an immense man in his proportions. He was tall, straight as an arrow,

and his shoulders, from the outside of one upper arm to the outside of the other, were fully four feet. His limbs were immense, and his strength phenomenal. In fact, he was a Hercules in proportions and strength.

His intellect was not of the brightest sort, yet he was no fool. His countenance was refreshing to look upon by reason of the habitual radiance of smile, disclosing teeth of regularity, and glistening white, which illuminated his shining, black, but regular features.

He was generally liked by officers and crew, and this had been so in every cruise he had made. This, also, was why the monkey had been admitted to the ship as his companion. His pure blood, bright eyes, and uniformly radiant face had been a passport to all the voyages he had made.

Pedro did his duty right along without running foul of anybody. But there was one peculiarity in his character, which was dangerous when he felt that he had been badly treated, wronged or abused, and that was, that a demon seemed to actuate him completely.

At such times his thick and pouting lips shrank to almost the thinness of a knife-blade, his teeth seemed twice as large as usual, much whiter, and many more of them, his complexion took on an ashy hue, and his eyes snapped with wrath at such times, which was not often, woe to the man who had wronged him.

Jabo became in a short time a pet of the crew,

being welcomed in any part of the ship except in the cabin, for the captain disliked monkeys. Jabo spent the greater part of the time in and about the galley, watching his master prepare and cook the rations with as much interest apparently as though he were human. Pedro talked and joked with him just as though he were so, and the monkey understood all that was said to him.

The pet monkey would sit there waiting for some nice morsel which Pedro had saved for him, and, indeed, the pet was treated with an attention and affection that was the very tip-top of devotion. But, as every animal has some weak place in its nature, including man, the pampered pet had his share of frailty.

One of Jabo's acquirements, or, rather, a natural trait, was quite human—he was a thief. He would sit in the galley watching Pedro, busy about his duties, occasionally getting a rich morsel of food, looking as amiable, as sanctimonious as though he never had an evil thought—indeed, as if he were the soul of honesty.

All of a sudden, without any warning he would grab a piece of something, perhaps a part of what had been prepared for the captain's table, and, escaping in the most human way, would bounce up the main rigging and out onto the lower yard, grasp the foot-rope with his tail, and swing there in all the ecstacy of spoliation.

Jabo knew, as well as his human cousin germain would know, that he had done wrong, but his

master was forgiving, as he also knew; and when he thought it was time to return and get a scolding in place of a beating, he would descend, and enter the galley with the funniest hypocritical expression on his face. It was extremely droll, it was so human.

These tricks were repeated, but always ended in forgiveness by Pedro and reformation by the monkey, until the brute was tempted again, when the same thing was repeated—forgiveness and all. Revelling in this leniency, Jabo had become a confirmed kleptomaniac, helping himself to whatever was eatable, no matter to whom it belonged.

Well, hitherto the brute had confined his depredations to the galley; but there came a time when he was tempted too far, which, however, was the cause of a most complete reformation.

He had put his paw into a pannikin belonging to one of the men, running off with a bit of choice salt-horse, which happened that day to be of extra quality and flavor, and, running up the rigging as usual, enjoyed the treat with both hands and paws, using his tail to the usual advantage.

When he thought it had all been forgotten—for, though monkeys refuse to speak, for their own purposes, they are right fair thinkers—he came down from aloft, went into the galley, and, finding everything peaceful there, made an excursion to the forecastle. The men had finished their dinner, and were yarning and playing pranks on each other.

The man who had lost the salt-horse from his pannikin—Frenchy, the men called him—had sworn vengeance against the thief. Jabo was sitting with his rump on one of the sea-chests, and his tail uncurled and laid out lengthwise on the chest.

Frenchy slipped up behind him, drew his sheath knife from his belt, and chopped off about two inches of the monkey's tail, destroying its prehensile quality, saying, in his broken English, "By gar, ze monkey no steal my horse *encore*."

Jabo bounded up the forecastle ladder and into the galley howling and pleading. Pedro soon saw what the matter was, and a shade of anger crossed his face, completely obliterating the usual smile. He did not let Jabo go out of his sight, but kept him fastened in the galley until the wound healed up. It soon became known who had cut Jabo's tail off, and Pedro vowed he would get even.

Jabo soon got well and about, and the very first thing he did was to make off with some pastry prepared for the captain's table, and up to the yard-arm he flew, slung his tail over the footrope and let go with both hands. But the holding power of his tail was gone, and he came down onto the deck, striking on his head, and in his fright letting the pastry go scattering over the deck. He got upon his feet, and stood there for a few seconds with the most perfect look of human disappointment and astonishment it is possible to imagine.

However, he was a reformed monkey from that

time. He had lost confidence in his tail, and the safety of refuge, and from that time forward he was as honest as a condoned bank defaulter, never touching a thing that was not given to him.

He was so penitent that I used to look at him and wonder whether mankind had not, under some system of evolution, been deprived of the tail for some such reason.

The crew had taken Jabo into fellowship again since his reformation, including Frenchy, making much of him, and, consequently, he was more frequently among the sailors. Pedro, however, although he had an honest monkey, had not forgiven Frenchy for his share in the monkey's reformation. He had it in for Frenchy, as the sailors say, and that led to ill-feeling between the two, which was, however, for a time smothered, like the banked fires under a steamer's boiler, to be fired up when occasion required.

It was in the first dog watch on a Sunday, when the greater part of the crew was lolling about the deck, forward of the forecastle, spinning yarns, singing, dancing, fiddling, and chaffing each other as only sailors can do. This chaffing is often rough, coarse and personal—sometimes profane.

Jabo was sitting on the windlass as demure and intent as though he were the judge of the propriety of what was going on. His half human face had that quiet repose so characteristic of the simian tribe—a look of wisdom that evolution might refine into speech. There he sat upright, in one

position, never stirring, but watching the motions of the men. Could the beast have laughed, he might have been accepted as a diminutive wild man just returning to the possession of faculties long dormant.

Ben Bosun was in the party. Ben was one of those salts who belonged to the old school of mariners, with but one modern idea, and that was, that he swore "Scatter my rivets," in place of "Shiver my timbers," claiming that there were no timbers in the iron ships now afloat to shiver.

Ben's face was round and plump, his hair grey and cut short, and his whiskers had been trained to grow from one ear to the other, touching no part of his face, and it was difficult to decide whether his throat or chin could claim that hairy adornment.

Ben was an aristocrat among the men, that is, they all looked up to him as a superior sort of sailorman, going to him for advice and making him the umpire in all their disputes. If both persons declined to abide by his decision, why, he just turned in and mauled both of them. Ben was regarded by the crew as being somewhere between forward and aft, not quite big enough for aft, and too big for the forecastle, and, in his way, an oracle. Whatever Ben decided to be so, was the belief of the forecastle, and often the law of that realm beneath the heel of the bowsprit.

One of the sailors, one Chain, started a new topic by saying: "I'm blow'd ef I dont ble've that ere bloomin' monkey knows every word what we're a

sayin', and ef he could talk, the cap'n 'ud put him ter greasin' down the mast, quicker 'n lightnin."

"That's all fol-de-rol," said Jack Staples, "afore a animal kin understand, he's 'bliged to have er soul, and this ere monkey, he ain't got nary one."

"Why couldn't he have not nary a one," asked Chain, with a look intended to convince Staples, "I've hearn tell, thet afore ships hed decks an' fok'sles an' all that, thousands o' years ago, ef a man went ded his soul'd shift quarters to the carcas o' a animal."

"Well, that's all rot," answered Staples, with some heat, "an' we'll leave it ter Bill Bosun fur ter decide, a twixt us. Wot de say, Bill?"

"Look a here, my lads," commenced Bill, looking as solemn as a statesman having some question of statecraft propounded to him, and answering cautiously: "Ye see, my hearties," and turning his quid over several times, as though that were the key to the combination to put his wits in order, delivered himself of the following: "Shipmates, I don't purtend to know what it pleased the Creator of all things to do, but," and here he mouthed his tobacco again, "what's ther matter uv Him what made the hull world, puttin' of a ded man's soul inter a animal's body—ef He seen fit? Now, takin' thet there view of it, there's nothin' onpossible in't es I kin see. An so, as Chain ses, this here monkey's ugly body mought be the fok'sle war som'body's soul is stowed away."

The men cried out in chorus, except Staples, who could not swallow any such theory.

"That's so. Bill, he knows." When that oracle continued, having rolled his quid over, in order to collect his ideas,

"Ye see, my bullies, when thet ere man was ded, in course he couldn't speak not no more, an his woice went along o' his body just as the bells o' his watch ringed him out. Ye see, agin, thet ef the woice o' thet ere ded man had 'er bl'nged to his soul, an not to his body, I 'low thet this ere monkey 'ud speak, an hev ter stan' watch along with the rest o' us."

"I know'd I was right," exclaimed Chain, "cause why, 'cause it stans to reason, es Bill ses, thet ef er man was ded, then his voice was ded, and his soul could go war it was sont to."

"I aint a d'sputen wot Bill ses," replied Staples, a bit angry because all were against him, "'cause he's got edicashun, an thets wot I aint got; but what 's the use o' sendin the soul o' a ded man inter a animal, an not sendin the woice along uv it."

"That's 'cause ye don't onderstan' Scriptur an sich things," answered Chain.

"Well, I don't bl'eve it."

"Why, ye swab," insisted Chain, "ain't Bill sed so, what more d' ye want."

"Don't call me a swab," angrily retorted Staples, "anyhow, I'd ruther be a swab nor a sojer, fur that's what ye air, an the ship's crew knows it."

"Ye dirty swab," retorted Chain savagely, put-

ting himself in a fighting attitude, "ef I was cap'n o' this ere ship I'd hev ye spread-eagled, an then hev ye lashed to the dolphin striker an give ye a bath."

The two men started for each other, and the monkey, which had been the innocent cause of it all, scampered away with a gait between a skip and a run, seeking refuge in the galley.

There was a prospect of a row, and Bill, seeing it coming, jumped between the men, saying in a conciliatory tone:

"Awast there, shipmates, ev'ry man kin bl'eve what he wants to, an ev'ry man kin onbl'eve what he wants to, an ef ye intend ter do any fightin' here, then I 'low I'll take a hand, an ef I does ye'll both feel the heft o' my maulers, I ses, ye're both on ye in the right one way, an both on ye're wrong tother way. Wot d' ye say, my lads?" said Bill appealing to the crew.

"Why, ye're jist what Bill ses, an thet's it," was the combined answer.

This restored amity, and, after a few moments, Bill commenced: "Now, my hearties, along o' that ere monkey I'll give ye a yarn wot ev'ry word's truer 'n preachin.

All hands surrounded the speaker anxious to hear his yarn, when Staples walked up to Chain, extended his great paw toward that person, saying:

"You an me ain't no enemies, aire we?"

"Right ye aire," replied Chain, "ony, ev'ry

man's 'titled to his own 'pinion, ef he is ony a fok'sle hand."

"That's so, shipmate," answered Staples, and, turning to Ben, bawled out:

"Were a listenin', Ben."

"Oncte, a good many years ago," commenced Bosun, "I hed a shipmate as his name was Frank Devens. He was one o' the best chantey men I ever heerd at a windlass bar, an he wasn't no common old *matelot*, nuther. He was the son o' a genle'man an' come inter the fok'sle cause he liked it, not cause he had 'ter, like us fellers right here. He talked jist like a book, 'cause he read all the books in the world, an' he know'd ev'rything in the world. He edicated me, an I'm proud o' him.

"He used ter spin er yarn what he called the cat-woman; 't was about a young gal as used ter turn herself into a cat.

"He says to me one night—we was in the same watch—Ben, ses he, ef ye had all the money in the world, what would ye do with it?"

"This was a stumper, 'cause I wasn't a 'ristocrat an' I didn't know much 'bout high livin 'cept salt-horse an the like a' that; but I hove to, an ses I, what would I do ef I had all the money in the world? Why, I'd buy all the rum an all the terbaccer."

"Frank, he looked at me with a consarned kind o' smile, an ses he, thet wouldn't spend all the money; what would ye do wi' the rest on 't? Why, ses I, a thinkin I'd be in clover, I'd buy more rum."

"Giv' us the cat-woman yarn, Ben," struck up

several of the men, "afore ye git all that ere rum stowed under yer hatches."

"I bl've I'm gittin a bit out o' my course, pr'hps a pint or two. Howsumever," explained Bill, "I'll give ye the yarn 'thout deviatin' agin."

"Frank's father give him more money 'en this ere fok'sle 'nd hold what's under us, more 'en a thousand dollars; an' Frank he went out inter Ohio for to buy a ile well.

"It was in one 'er them ere places war the natives live all winter by cheatin each other, an' in the summer time they combines an cheats the greenhorns what comes ter buy ile land.

"In the house war Frank lived out there was two gals what was the darters uv the man what kep' the boardin' house. No matter war Frank was, one o' them gals was clost to him. The door mought be locked, an the winders shot down tight; but thar was that ere gal all the same, inter the room, and she must 'er come throo the keyhole—leastwise thet's what Frank thot.

"It wasn't not no matter what Frank was a doin of, with the doors an winders shot tighter nor a ship's hatches in a storm, thar was that ere gal a' lookin right over his shoulder, an, when he turned roun' thair was nothin thar, 'cept the tail o' a cat a-goin' throo the winder 'thout injurin' o' the glass.

"Frank, he bot a gun an he lay fur the thing, whatever it mought be, not a thinkin as it was mor'n a cat; an one night, about eight bells, Frank sees two big eyes a flamin in the corner o' the room,

an behind em wus a big black animal a switchin of its tail like it was mad. Frank grappled onto his gun, an, as the thing 'scaped throo the keyhole, he let fly, an, es soon es the gun went off the hull fambly cum a runnin ter see what was the matter; an thet ere cat was transmogrified inter that ere gal, an she was a layin' in the back yard with a bullet-hole jist aft o' er starboard breast, an' the blood a streamin out."

Staples gave a long whistle, Chain looked perplexed, and I tried to look as if I believed it.

Chain spoke up, saying:

"Thar's one thing I wants for to ax ye. Was thar any o' the hair o' that cat a stickin to the keyhole?" Ben, without answering the question, said:

"Ev'ry man kin ble've what he wants ter, an ev'ry man kin onble've wot he wants ter."

CHAPTER XII.

THE FISH LIAR.

William Marson, a boatsteerer on board the Peri, was yet a young man, being about twenty-five, who had made several whaling voyages before the mast, and, being well known as an efficient and good sailor, had been shipped as above, and that was his first promotion.

He was a native of the State of New York, having been born in one of the small towns in the interior of that State, where he had passed his life, until he was about seventeen years of age, upon his father's farm, so that he was used to hard labor. He was a level-headed fellow, and when asked why he preferred the hard life of a seaman, rather than that of a farmer, explained in this way:

"Farming," said he, "even when one owns the land, is not only a laborious and exacting occupation, but an uncertain one, also. Machinery, in this as in other pursuits, has taken the place of manual labor, and the man who depends upon agricultural labor as a means of gaining a living is out of employment for at least half of the year. A reaping, mowing, or threshing machine will do the work of a whole county, and take the place of

many men who otherwise would be employed the year round.

"There can be no competition by hand labor with machinery, and so it becomes a measure of economy with the employing farmer in two ways. First, he saves money by employing the machine, which does its work in a short time, rather than men at so much per day: and in securing his crops is not subject to combinations of laborers, changes of weather and other vicissitudes which surround the old system of hand labor.

"Besides, there is a tameness in the life of a farm hand which is irksome to an intelligent, active, ambitious youngster. The hum-drum of such a life is unbearable, and this is why the young men of rural populations are deserting the occupation of their fathers and flocking to the large cities in search of fortune. This, of course, crowds the ranks of unskilled labor in the large cities of our country, and, one of the outlets of this crowded condition is the sea, with its presumed poetry, but actual hardship.

"Aside from these causes, young men are often impatient of the restraints of home, and seek a broader field, in which to develope their faculties: they do not take kindly to the beaten track laid out by former generations, but desert and swell the ranks of the unemployed in the great marts of labor.

"If a farmer, in some of the Eastern States, owns a farm of from seventy-five to one hundred acres, over one half of it is outcropping rock, producing nothing. The summers are short, the winters long,

and the farmer with a homestead has literally to wrest a living from the soil."

This was all said in a tone of earnest conviction, and in fair language considering the opportunities Marson had had. It was uttered in a slow and deliberate manner, as we huddled beneath the shadow of the hen-coop one night in the middle watch. I liked this shipmate very much, as we were about the same age—that is, in boyish ways, though not in years—and many were the talks we have had in the solemn darkness of our watches, and many were the yarns he would spin to the men in the forecastle in idle hours and on holidays.

At home, before he became a sailor, Marson had filled in the intervals of labor with the sport of fishing and gunning, in which he had become, as he claimed, an expert. He knew all the haunts of the wily trout and black bass, of which he was very proud and talkative. He was a good sailor and a cool determined hand in fastening to a whale, when the dare-devil in his nature seemed to develope for the contest.

Marson was a good, honest, manly fellow; but his weak spot was his ability to fabricate big stories about his prowess in fishing and hunting, more especially of fishing, in which he claimed to be an adept. He never tired of fishing his native streams, in imagination, when the men were yarning in the forecastle, or in our silent watches; and I really believe that he had no idea that he was drawing a long bow at such times.

He took a great fancy to me, perhaps, because I was a good listener and never raised any objection to the truth of his extravagant yarns. He was the soul of honor, would rather give than take, and truthful in everything not connected with his favorite pastime. The men did not spare him at all, for the foremast-man rarely exhibits any forbearance in such things unless the yarn happens to be full of supernatural events, when Jack takes it all in as a part of the freight of what little brains he has.

The sailorman is not generally endowed with sentiment, and in order to reach what sensibility he has, one must appeal to him with some horror. After listening patiently, the men would advise him to "stowe that" or to "carry it to the marines." Marson was the but of the forecastle on these occasions; but the more hilarious the disbelief, the more our hero thought himself misunderstood, never seeming to have a misgiving that he was not telling the exact truth.

The boatsteerer, Marson, had an old gun, of doubtful safety, which he had brought on board ship with him, and a small bag of fishing tackle, not of the kind used by elegant sportsmen, but good enough for on board ship. If one put credence in all that Marson said, one must *per force* believe, without examination, that he had caught larger fish, and more of them than any other living man.

So impressed was he with the prowess of his own expeditions, that the same yarns, being repeated,

assumed more ample proportion the oftener they were told. I never had the heart to disabuse him of the idea that I disbelieved all he told me in this regard.

Well, whenever he had leave to go ashore, he managed to have me go with him. He was not at all like the conventional sailor in appearance, gait, or conversation. Some men never get to be rough salts pickled all through, with a rolling gait like a porpoise wallowing in the sea—such as graduate from a war-ship, or a long voyage merchantman. In fact, Marson was a genteel appearing young fellow, who might have been taken anywhere, after being ashore for a few months, for a store clerk.

His stories concerning his catches were marvels of absurdity. He had caught shark in every part of the world, larger, longer, and more savage than had ever been seen by any other person. However, he was not alone in this inability to overestimate his powers—the fish-liar is ubiquitous.

There are so many people in the world, upright, truthful and conscientious, who do not imagine it irregular to exaggerate about their sporting success—it is an amiable weakness, and one of the outcomes of the genius of human nature.

There is a fellowship in fishing that makes all the world akin. The aristocratic votary of the gentle craft will stoop from his high estate and discuss, with interest and urbanity, the taking power of this or that bait, the construction of this or that fly, the various seasons of the year, and the

haunts for fishing, with a tramp, and lie like a commoner about the catches he has made.

Man seems to have been, at all times and in all ages, proud of his conquest over the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea. Story telling has been an honored vocation from the earliest period of time, when troubadours and minnesingers were the transmitters of history, song and poetry. Whatever they sang or recited was a skillful admixture of truth and fiction, colored in obedience to party prejudice, and to the temperament of the narrator. But, it belongs to the angler, *par excellence,* to make stories of whole cloth, having, as it were, but two truthful elements, the water and the fact of fish being therein.

We take occasion to offer advice, and to admonish all gentle anglers to beware and not be led into temptation. The nets of the Evil One are always set, ready to ensnare the unwary. It may be too late, when the lying brother sportsman discovers his mistake and finds himself floundering in the toils of the arch fiend, to stretch forth his imploring hands for succor towards those who have never distorted the facts about their catch, but who have told the truth to an ounce—as they understood it.

The spirits of truthful anglers, their duty in this world being done, shall sail in unseen boats to those fruitful fishing waters, on that other shore, where every fish is golden, and which increase in size, in beauty, and in value, forever, and forever. The untruthful brother of the gentle art shall remain

here, forever, fishing in troubled waters on an unblessed shore.

They shall thrash the waters with flies that never cause a rise: they shall hope on, hope ever, to strike the largest and finest fish, which they shall never take, but which, like the drink of Tantalus, shall be in constant view but never obtainable—they shall never catch, nor cease from trying, but fish on to an unknown fate—this shall be the end of the fish-liar.

Before the ship sailed from Boston, Marson obtained from the mate leave to go ashore, there were some matters yet to be arranged between the captain and the owners of the Peri, and, consequently, the ship was not ready to sail.

I asked the mate if I could go with Marson. After looking me all over, from my shoes to the top of my hat, without speaking a word, he nodded Yes, with a pleasant smile growing about his lips. We started without more ado, with light hearts, for a bit of vacation before undertaking our voyage to the whaling grounds of the Atlantic, Pacific and Arctic. We embarked in one of the ship's boats, having a lugger sail, and filled away for a large island in the distance. As soon as we got ashore Marson commenced rigging up his fishing line. I had none, and so I became a participating spectator.

"Now, Johnnie," said my shipmate, "I'll show you how to catch fish, and big ones, too."

"I hope so," I replied, but, having no faith in

anything he said, merely asking "Are you going to fish from the shore or from the boat?"

From the shore, he answered without looking up.

On the island lived a few fisher families. We commenced fishing—that is, my shipmate did, for, as I explained above, I had no tackle. Armed with a stout line, himself at one extremity and a squid at the other, he invited me to observe closely just how he did it.

"Now," said he, "you take your line in this way," and all the time he was arranging the tackle, "and throw it out to sea, like this."

The ocean had a good swell on, and came rolling up the beach like suds thrown from a washtub.

After getting his line fixed to suit him, and explaining again, "You see, Johnnie, the fish are in deep water," he took a firm hold of the line a few feet from the squid, I looking admiringly on, and by a series of dexterous gyrations about his head, sent it flying about a hundred feet out to the sea. It was beautifully done.

Skillfully he hauled it in, hand-over-hand, the squid following like a living thing, bright and shimmering as when he had thrown it out—but no fish was attached to it.

Making ready again, he said, "Johnnie, I did'nt happen to strike him that time, but next time you'll see a bouncer."

He attempted again, and, with the nonchalant manner and air of a man who feels perfectly sure that he can do just what he wants to, he gave the

squid that preparatory whirling motion again, and away it went, but not in the direction he intended.

The noblest efforts will often fail, and the most skillful are sometimes doomed to disappointment—it was so in this case. The squid did not go seaward, but fastened itself in the hind leg of a too-confiding dog belonging to the island, which stood there with canine curiosity just as those quadruped friends of man so often do.

The animal went howling away, but was hauled in hand-over-hand, as a fish would have been, and the hook extracted. This surgical operation being done, the misguided dog went whining away to its master.

Marson persisted, however, he knew he could do it and tried it again, with as much preparation as before and twice as much determination. He missed the sea altogether, and the barbed messenger buried itself in that part of his wearing apparel which comes in contact with the chair, when he indulged in that agreeable and refreshing attitude of sitting down.

My shipmate looked disconcerted, saying, "This isn't a very good day for fishing; the sea is too rough. Guess I'll have a shoot."

"Is there any shooting on this island?" I remarked, not betraying by a muscle of my face but what I thought the failure was owing to the roughness of the sea.

"There must be duck on this island, and it's a good

day for duck shooting; the wind is just right, if I only knew where to go."

Just as he said this, a fisherman, the owner of the dog, one of the inhabitants of the island, came along. When asked if there were any ducks on the island, he replied:

"I guess so. There's a pond, a shallow one, about half a mile from here, and the ducks often light there."

As we walked off in the direction indicated, the fisherman said: "Say, stranger, let me go on ahead. If you can't shoot no better'n you can fish, I geuss I better chain my dog till you're gone."

Marson made no reply; but we quickened our steps, reached the pond, and, secreting ourselves behind some rushes, waited for them to come—and waited.

Finally there came, sailing straight for the pond, one of those round, plump little ducks, known as water-witches, or hell-divers. This duck gets its name from its habit of dodging any shot sent after it. The duck plunged into the water, sporting around without seeming fear, tossing the water up over its back, which ran off its polished plumage in drops of diamond brilliancy.

With the feelings of a true sportsman, wanting the bird to have a fair chance, and not wishing to kill it while sitting on the water, our gunner threw stones and turf at it to make it get up; but it would not fly. Taking aim, Marson fired, the shot striking

the water with a swish as if a sudden shower had fallen upon it, the duck diving.

This alternate shooting and diving continued for an hour or two, the bird diving each time at the flash of the gun, and defiantly coming up to await the reloading of the old fusee. And so the battle continued.

Marson said we had better go to one of the huts and get some dinner. We did so, and after finishing the meal, returned to the pond to renew the fight. We found the duck patiently awaiting our arrival, busily engaged in picking the shot from the bottom of the pond, tossing it up and catching it in its bill as it came down.

With such a gunner, aud such a duck, the sport might have lasted a week. Strategem was resorted to, and, when the duck plunged under at the flash of the gun, Nimrod waded out quickly and struck the duck, with the but of the gun, as it appeared on the surface. So ended our leave, and we returned to the ship; within a week we were out on the broad Atlantic.

I told the story to the first mate, in confidence and without malice, and, the story being such a good one, the mate let it out, when it became common property. Often, when Bill Marson, as the crew called him, would be spinning a yarn, some one would quiet him by asking, "Bill, which end o' your gun shoots the best?"

In a half laughing way, he would turn to me, saying, "Johnnie, that was mean of you."

CHAPTER XIII.

A STORM.

The captain was in a good humor, as were the mates, and the crew was as jolly and happy as men could possibly be, having a prospect of two years and over of "salt horse," seasoned with a reasonable hope of a good "lay" at the end of the voyage.

We had been very fortunate as to weather, having had nothing in that way to necessitate any work higher than the deck except an occasional taking in of royals and reefing or furling the topsails. We were steering large under all plain sail, with lookouts in the "top" for a showing of whales, the deck waiting to hear the welcome cry, "There she blows."

The men were lolling about deck, in the shadow of the sails, under a sky of celestial beauty. It was a lovely evening, the air sweet and balmy from a flowing sea which followed in our wake with tumbling waves capped with foam and lashed into sparkling white caps, which, breaking into foam-embroidered structures, dropped off into hollows between green hillocks of ocean water, to mount again to other summits in a new crest at the bidding of the breeze.

Now and again the wind lulled as if tired of its

own efforts, bringing the sails flapping against the rigid masts: the ends of loose rope slapped spitefully against whatever happened to be within their reach, while the unemployed reef-points drummed a rhythm of fairy music against the bellying sails.

The sun was sinking into the west, leaving in its wake a band of rosy-hued sky. The weather was such as to arouse whatever of sentiment existed in the hearts of the sailormen, and to assure the landsmen among them that going to sea was but a bit of the poetry of nature.

The stars came out in patches, revealed against an illimitable arch so beautifully blue as to preclude almost the possibility of such a thing as a storm. Far into the gathering night the gentle, murmuring wind continued its soothing lullaby, the ship moving along like a spirit of the deep arisen to the ocean level to enjoy for a while the swelling billows, and vie in pleasures with the sprites of the upper air. And so the night passed.

The early morning began by showing the ugly side of ocean life. There appeared a dark and gloomy sky, the sun not making its advent in the usual glory, not showing on the horizon line in an effulgence of pink radiance, the earnest of a clear and welcome day, but above the line of sea and horizon in a bank of dark, ominous-looking cloud.

Great ragged, tufted, jagged piles of cloud began to gather as if making an effort to blot out the glories of the preceding day, while across the untainted portion of the heavens, black scud was

driving, giving the aspect of sea and sky a wicked look, denoting that a fierce and violent storm was brewing; the disturbed condition of the atmosphere giving assurance that before many hours it would be breaking upon us.

There was a heavy swell heaving after us with a sort of vibrating, throbbing sound closing in around the ship, while the distance gave out at intervals a bellowing sound which came to us in warning notes.

It was a condition of weather difficult to account for except upon the theory that we might be sailing upon the outer edge of a cyclone. The barometer was unmistakable in its indication of a coming storm, perhaps a gale, and there was little doubt that we might expect to feel it before long, and also, that it was time to be getting ready to meet it.

About nine o'clock in the morning, something like an hour after breakfast, the captain came out of his cabin, paced up and down the deck a few times, without speaking to anyone, looked up at the trim of the sails, then out over, and around the trembling sea, as if forming a judgment of the weather. His eyes finally rested on the thick appearance to the eastward. He looked a little perplexed, and, going up to the first mate, whose watch it was, said in a tone loud enough for all to hear:

"Mr. Ryder, I fear we are going to have a streak of ugly weather. The barometer has been unsteady for a day or two, and is now falling very rapidly."

"It don't look quite right over there, sir," answered the mate, pointing to the eastward, "besides, the sun came out of a cloud bank this morning; but for all that we won't get it this forenoon. I've seen worse than that end in a summer day."

"Aye," responded the captain, "but I am a little suspicious. The weather in these seas is as capricious as a coquette. Better take in your royals and flying jib."

"Aye, aye, sir," answered the mate, shouting at the same time:

"Clew up royals, jump aloft, men, to furl."

I bounced into the fore rigging and started for the foreroyal yard with the other men, for I began to feel equal to any job aloft that I might be ordered to do.

"Stand by to take in and stow flying-jib," roared Mr. Ryder, the men running to the duty.

The royals were furled ship-shape fashion, and the jib stowed away neatly and sailorlike, when the order came from the captain, "Send down royals," which order was repeated by the mate.

"Lay aloft there, bullies, and send down royals."

While this was being done some of the men were at the necessary deck work, the gale meanwhile increasing rapidly, indicating a "snorter," as sailors say, when the orders were given in succession:

"Haul down mizzen to'gallant and main to'gallant-staysails." "Clew up gaff-topsail," which

was done with a will, and "Clew up fore to'gallant-sail."

"Haul down mizzen topmast-staysail." "Clew up main to'gallant-staysail."

"Jump aloft there, my men, and furl fore to'-gallant-staysails and main to'gallantsails." "Furl gafftopsail."

The wind was now rattling everything that happened to be loose, and howling through the rigging, threatening to tear away what sail we were yet carrying.

"I expect we'll have to strip her, Mr. Ryder. The gale seems to be increasing. Take in main topmast-staysail, and upper-topsails."

"Lively, men," yelled Mr. Ryder, "haul down main topmast-staysail," "Slack down upper fore and main topsails."

"All ready?"

"All ready, sir."

"Lay aloft, men, lay aloft, to furl topsails."

"All was hurry and confusion. The deck was washed from stem to taffrail, the water choking up in the lee scuppers; ends of rope were writhing about the deck, the spars were groaning in unison with the swing of the yards, the creaking of blocks, and rattle of chains. The noise was deafening, and all talking had to be done in loud tones.

"We must take in everything. It's a nasty blow, Mr. Ryder."

"It is, that, indeed, sir," struggled Ryder's voice

above the roar of the wind. The stentorian tones of the captain overtopped the howling storm:

"Haul up mainsail." "Brail up spanker." "Down with jib," and then out of the roar of the storm, as if Neptune himself were in command, "Furl mainsail." "Furl spanker." "Stow the jib." This being done, the mate suggested to the captain, "Better take in something more, Captain Folsom. I don't think she'll carry what's on her."

"All right. Haul up forecourse." "Clew up lower foretopsail." "Goosewing maintopsail."

Meanwhile all hands were at work either on deck or aloft, the ship was tearing through sea and foam, pitching and rolling as though impatient of the sail she yet carried, when Captain Folsom ordered:

"Furl mainsail, Mr. Ryder, and furl lower foretopsail." "Shake goosewing and furl lower maintopsail." "I hope she'll carry what's on her now."

I think she's running a little unsteady, sir," answered Mr. Ryder.

"Well," ordered the captain, "clear away and hoist main staysail." "Hoist fore staysail."

We were now running under fore and main staysails, the sea running wild and driving the Peri into mad plunges, and every plunge sending a deluge of sea swashing over the deck, fore and aft, the figurehead emerging from every sea with undiminished gaze seaward, looking as new and bright as varnish, and complacent as if riding out a summer sea.

The oilbag was swung from the weather cat-

head, leaving a wake of gloss in the ship's track, that stilled the sea to a very great extent. The wind had now increased beyond the force of a storm and become a gale. The demons on the wind screamed their anger through the rigging with a howl of devastation, threatening to carry the spars over the side and leave the old ship a hulk on the ocean.

The men held on as best they could, and we waited in suspense and agony to see what would happen next: to see if we should be obliged to strip the vessel and scud under bare poles, or heave to and take the chances of riding out the storm. Ocean's wrath seemed let loose for destruction.

The wind struck the ship in a solid wall, laden with a deluge of rain, driving, pitiless, pelting and cold. Darkness increased, and chaos seemed come again. The good old fabric groaned, struggled, and writhed to outride the gale. The sea-washed decks threatened every moment to take the men, stout of heart as the timbers of their ocean home, off their feet and send them to briny graves. The black pinions of death flapped over the trembling ribs of the devoted Peri.

The gale lasted all through the day and night without diminution. After daylight it began to diminish in force somewhat, but continued in heavy squalls until along about eleven o'clock in the morning, when the rain ceased, the wind died down, and the sun attempted to struggle through flying clouds of dense blackness and thick weather.

About two o'clock in the afternoon the sun conquered by bursting through the storm-clouds, dispelling them, and appearing in all the splendor of that cheering light of the world.

The main and fore topsails were loosed and sheeted home: the jib hauled down and tautened aft, the fore course dropped, made fast, and stiffened with the bowlines, the spanker unfurled and hauled out, and the fore-staysail furled. The main course was set, the main-staysail taken in, and the flying jib put on.

While sail was being made, a general snugging up of the deck was going on by some of the men; the remaining part of the crew engaged in putting on more sail. The fore and main to'gallantsails were set, as were the main to'gallant-staysails, and the mizzen topmast-staysails sent up.

Royals were sent up and set, mizzen to'gallant-staysail, and fore-royal sheeted home, the main bowlines hauled out and the yards braced sharp up, with the wind forward of the waist.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE COOK'S MONKEY AGAIN.

The passing away of the storm and the sight of the sun was inspiriting to the officers and men, the crew working away diligently, cleaning up decks and putting in ship-shape what the storm and confusion had disarranged, while the Peri walked proudly off under all plain sail as if there had been no threatening disturbance.

Luckily nothing had been carried away, not a thread of either sails or rigging damaged. The hen-coop, however, had been broken from its fastenings, a serious matter at sea, and the fowls sent flying and struggling in our wake. It was the first storm I had experienced, and, to me, had been a very serious affair.

I was at work scrubbing up the deck, my feet bare and trousers rolled up to my knees, armed with a mop. Ned Ricks was close to me, and commenced talking in his peculiar soft accents, loud enough, however, for me to hear distinctly.

"Quickstep," he said, "you think that wus a storm, don't ye," looking at me with a knowing expression on his singular countenance, "but that wusn't nothin' to what ye'll git when it blows a harrycane, or a cyclocane, an' ye'r 'bliged to sail under bare poles with nary a rag."

"Well," I replied, "that is storm enough for me; but if there comes a stiffer one I'll take my chances with the rest of you."

"Right ye aire, my lad. I didn't mean fer to skeer ye. I'll tell ye what, Quickstep, there's goin' to be a jolly row atwixt the cook an' thet ere Frenchy afore this ere vyage is up, all along o' thet ere monkey."

"Who says that?"

"Nob'dy, didn't say it. I heerd the cook a grumblin' to hisself, an' him an' Frenchy's had some fights in words. Frenchy chucks out some kind o' er slur ev'ry time he passes the galley, but 's yet 'taint broke out."

This set me to thinking, and I remarked to Ricks:

"I would be very sorry to see it; and if I thought I could stop it before it goes any further, I would speak to the mate about it and prevent it."

"What I ses, Quickstep, is thet it won't do not no good to interfere atween sailors when they gits riled, cause they've got to hev it out. It's like tryin' to stop a man a beatin' o' his wife, the woman ginerally turns on ye an' scratches your eyes out."

"Well, I've a mind to try it. You know Pedro has a murderous temper."

"I knows thet ye means well," said Ricks, "but it wouldn't do not no good. Howsumdever, I wisht ye would, fur I kinder hates to see two men a' fightin', 'specially 'bout a bloomin' animal what

ain't human. But the wust on't is thet I can't stan' by an' see a man killed 'thout interferin', an ef the cook gits after thet ere Frenchy he'll make short work on't."

"We must try and prevent it, but if it were certain that neither of them would be hurt, it would be much better to let them have it out."

"'Course it would, cause, ef men fights, no matter who gits the wust on't, they gits to be good frens arterwards—'specially ef they both gits licked about the same."

"The man Frenchy," I continued, "seems to be a harmless sort of fellow. The monkey stole his dinner, and that is a serious loss to a sailorman."

"So 'tis, so 'tis; but thet wusn't not no justice to cut off the monkey's tail off; thet ere was crulty. What orter hev been done was to make the cook give up some o' his own dinner to Frenchy, an the cook go 'thout any."

"But tell me, Tom," I asked, "what have either of them done, since the affair of the monkey stealing the Frenchman's dinner, to aggravate each other?"

"Frenchy ses as how thet the cook fixes the wittles so 's he gits the wust part of the mess, an' 'sides, thet he don't git his share an' share alike; when he goes past the galley he 'ludes to the monkey's tail an' all that. Thet's wery aggravokin, thet is, ye know; an' I'm afeered that ef the cook gits in one o' his tantrums thet Frenchy's life ain't wuth much."

These side-plays continued between Pedro and Frenchy until it was only a question of a short time when there must be a settlement between them. One day there had been quite a heavy shower, and the deck was wet and slippery. Pedro had stretched a line across the back of the galley upon which he had hung some cloths to dry. Frenchy came along, and, making believe to stumble, tore the line loose, letting the cloths fall to the wet and grimy deck. Pedro sprang out of the galley, looking like a demon—his face was fiendish.

"Wa' bisness you got to frow down my line on de deck?" demanded Pedro.

"Aha, vat for ze damn monkey steal my horse an' run up ze riggin'. Ze nex-a-time he make so to me, by gar, I cut ze head off, zen he no eat horse *encore.*"

The cook started for the Frenchman, saying in tones of extreme anger:

"Ef yo tech dat monkey agin' I frow ye ober de ship's rail."

As he said this he advanced. Frenchy drew his sheath knife, and made a murderous pass at the cook. Pedro seized his antagonist by both wrists, wrenching them until Frenchy dropped the knife upon the deck, when, seizing the Frenchman by the neck and seat of the trousers, he raised him above his head as if he were a feather, and started to the port rail with the intention of throwing him

overboard—which he would have done had he not been prevented.

This was all enacted in a few seconds, and began and ended almost before the mate, (the captain not being on deck,) knew anything of it. If Pedro's attempt had not been arrested in time Frenchy would have been tossed into the sea, and Pedro, with whom all the men were in sympathy, would have been a murderer.

But, just at the moment when the Frenchman was raised high above the cook's head, Ned Ricks rushed in, seized the black by the shoulder, whirled him around toward the galley, grabbed the victim and hauled both down to the deck, holding them there. The cook tugged, mad with passion, with all his great strength, to get possession of the frightened and ghostly-pale Frenchman.

I never saw such tenacity, such superhuman strength as was exhibited by Ricks. He was slight of build; but, when in a good cause, he proved a giant. The fracas brought the captain out of his cabin, and he ordered Pedro into the galley and sent the Frenchman off on some duty at the other end of the ship.

Captain Folsom went to his quarters, and in a few moments thereafter sent the steward for the first mate. When that officer appeared the captain learned all the particulars of the disturbance, and then ordered both men to be sent aft. Both appeared, and an investigation took place.

"Mr. Ryder," commenced the captain, "who commenced this quarrel?"

"I don't rightly know, sir. It seems it has been brewing for a long time, and only broke out to-day." Turning to the cook, Captain Folsom said:

"Pedro, let me hear your story." The cook turned a few shades paler, a sort of ash-gray, answering:

"Wall, sah, ye see I has a monkey on dis yere ship, an' he wus reg'lar shipped at de time dat I wus. Wall, sah, one day dis yere Frenchy done got his kid wid his dinner in it, an' sot it down on de deck. Jis' den, Jabo, dat's my monkey, kem along, an', de mess bein' cooked fus-class, de monkey help hisself to de meat part of de mess. Wall, sah, dis yere Frenchy, he cut off de tail ob de monkey, an' ruin him for life."

"Then it was all about the monkey?" inquired the captain.

"Yes, sah. Ef de monkey had been lef alone I would 'er made dat meat good outen my own mess."

"Let me hear *your* story, my man," said Captain Folsom, turning to the Frenchman.

"Monsieur Capitaine, zat monkey is one *mauvais* monkey. He tell ze lie; he steal ze *viande*, he steal-a my dinnaire, an' run up ze riggin' to ze topsail yard *avec* my horse. Ven he come down *encore* I chop ze tail off, a leetle bit. *Ah, mon Dieu!* mon capitaine, he ver honest since zat time; he no steal mon *cheval encore.*"

The mate was present at this examination, hardly

able to suppress his laughter. The captain being in the same condition, said to the mate :

" We cannot do without the services of the cook. We must eat. Put the Frenchman in irons, below, until such time as he promises not to create another disturbance on board this ship, and have the monkey, the cause of all the row, thrown overboard."

The Frenchman was taken away, protesting that the cook was in fault, and promising, in a vociferous way, that he would not in future break the peace of the ship; but he was ironed all the same and sent below.

Pedro was in despair that he was going to lose his pet, and to lose him in this way. He begged the captain not to have Jabo thrown overboard; but that officer was inexorable—the thing must be done; discipline must be maintained.

All the men were down in the mouth that the affair had terminated in this way, for Jabo was a pet of all the crew except Frenchy, especially since the reformation of the animal. Indeed, I think the crew had experienced a sort of grim pleasure that the monkey had stolen the Frenchman's dinner. The men finally prevailed on Mr. Ryder to go to the cabin and try to change the sentence of the monkey to one of banishment at the first place the ship touched.

Mr. Ryder was in earnest and went to quarters with the following result.

" Captain," began the mate, with a preliminary cough or two, " the men are dreadfully worked up

about the sentence of the monkey, and I feel myself, as if the animal is in no way responsible, nor a party to the fracas."

The captain looked as grave as possible, remembering the scene in the cabin, and answered: "Mr. Ryder, I will have discipline on this ship, if I have to put half the crew in irons. There is no other way to punish the cook. Suppose that Hercules, Pedro, had thown the man over the rail into the sea, and he had been drowned. I should then have been obliged to imprison him and keep him in confinement until we reached some port where there is an American consul."

"That's all true sir, but—"

"No buts, if you please. I will hear no more, sir," testily replied the captain. "See that my orders are obeyed. As to the monkey, see the sentence executed before noon to-morrow. I hope the Frenchman is already in durance."

"All right, sir," said the mate, leaving the cabin to go forward.

Pedro declared that if the monkey were thrown overboard he would jump after him and drown also. Finally, after much palaver among the men, a round-robin was prepared, all the men signing it, including Frenchy, asking that the life of the monkey be spared; and Ben Bosun was deputed to face the captain with it.

Ben mustered up his courage, rolled his way aft to the cabin, holding the round-robin almost at arm's

length, as if he were afraid it would explode before the captain touched a match to it. Stopping at the companion way, he gave his trousers a preparatory hitch, adjusted his quid, so that his brains might not be alist, and entered the sacred precinct aft.

Captain Folsom looked quizzically at him. "Well, what brings you here, my man?" he asked.

"Ye see, sir," said Ben, quite abashed, "the crew, sir, to a man," (here he broke down and commenced twirling his cap in a nervous manner,) "the crew, sir, wants ter present the case o' thet bloomin' monkey, like this 'ere, sir. They ses as how they all likes him, the monkey, an' is all willin' to do extra work an' all thet, sir, ef ye'll change thet 'ere sentence to imprisonment fur life in the galley, along o' the cook."

The captain smiled grimly, which Ben was too earnest to take notice of, and sent for the mate to come to the cabin. Meanwhile, Ben chewed his quid, as if for a wager. When the mate arrived the captain explained.

"Mr. Ryder, the men have petitioned for the life of the monkey. I know, of course, that the animal is not responsible, and that the sentence was severe, but it is the only way to punish the cook. Now, I will do this. If the men will pledge themselves that there shall be no more murderous quarrels, and Frenchy and the cook will shake hands and be friends, I will agree that the monkey shall be spared."

Ben, the entreating ambassador, was sent forward,

full of importance, on this amicable mission. He returned in a short time, saying, in substance, that the men were all agreed, and the forecastle would see that both parties kept the compact. The captain turned to Mr. Ryder, with a merry twinkle in his eye, as if he had worked it out about as he intended.

"That was a very narrow escape of the monkey, Mr. Ryder."

"Yes, sir," answered the mate, "and a narrower one for the Frenchman," as if he saw no humor at all in the whole thing.

"But who," asked the captain, with mock gravity, "will be security for the good behavior of the men?"

Ben looked at the captain, then at the mate, as if he were the only responsible party on board the ship, and volunteered.

"Why, sir, as to thet ere matter, sir, I'm willin' to go bail. I've got a matter o' a hundred and fifty dollars in the Seaman's Savin' Union, an' ef anythin' happens to this ere ship, through the crew, I'll pay for her." Having delivered himself of this generous offer, he left the cabin, well satisfied with himself, and went forward to report.

Shortly after this settlement, I saw Ricks coiling away some loose rope, when I accosted him. "Ned, I am glad you saved the Frenchman's life; it was noble of you."

"I'm glad too, Quickstep; but, atwixt you and me, I b'leve the monkey's the best man o' the two. I didn't never like Frenchy, no how, but I kinder

didn't like to see a human a-goin' over the ship's side to be drownded."

So ended the affair of the cook's monkey. Although he was quite a factor in the ship's disturbances, he was, of course, unconscious of his agency. He went on as usual, doing just what he had been accustomed to do, except that he stole no more meat nor went aloft, using his tail in its prehensile quality.

Considering the termination of the row between the cook and Frenchy, the remembrance of it was a cause of much humor and amusement, quietly, both in the forecastle and in the cabin.

CHAPTER XV.

CHASING WHALES.

We were now cruising in latitude about 23° South, longtitude 39° West, a whaling ground known to be one where whales are plentiful sometimes—especially sperm. The Peri was moving along under easy sail with a watch at the masthead on the lookout for game. The weather was clear, hot as a gridiron, with light wind, but that breathing health.

At every puff that struck the ship the sails gave a remonstrant slap against the unresisting spars.

As yet we had not seen a whale, but, being a reputed good ground for sperm whale, our daily hope, I may say prayer, was to raise one or more—that is, to see a spout, and hear the welcome cry from the masthead, "There she blows."

Every man and boy on board was all anxiety and impulse to get at the prey. Those who had been in pursuit of the monster on other voyages were eager for the enjoyment of the chase, and those who were green were in a state of expectancy from what they had heard of forecastle yarning. Besides all this the men were on a "lay," which means no catch, no pay, except what is received from the advance pay, and from the "slop

chest," Whales and their capture meant wages at the end of the voyage—so, all was excitement, from the captain down to the ships' boy. The pay is all prospective, that is, a certain proportion of the value of the catch, when sold, on the return of the ship to the sailing port.

Everything a man needs when at sea is furnished from a storeroom called the "slop chest," and charged to his account, to be paid for when the voyage is closed and the ship returns to the home port, when a settlement is had.

Whatever a man may have drawn during the voyage is deducted from the value of his "lay," the basis of settlement being the value of the cargo, fixed and agreed upon when the crew sign articles.

It often happens, however, that there is no catch, or very little, the vessel returning home "clean," or empty. In that case the advance, and what clothing a man may have drawn, is all he gets, the owner making all the losses.

The wages, if any, are comprised in "long lays," and "short lays." The captain and other officers get the short ones, which are the best, the long ones falling to the lot of the men in proportion to their respective grades on board the ship.

Under this lottery system of wages the owner takes a risk greater than that of the crew, for the reason that if the ship returns "clean," he loses all, while the men lose their time, getting nothing except what they are ahead on the "slop chest" and advance pay.

During the voyage, the cargo is at the risk of the crew, and if lost there is nothing to be divided. But as soon as the cargo leaves the ship it is in possession of the owner, being then, generally, insured for the benefit of all concerned.

The agreement of what the lay shall be depends something upon the size of the vessel, how many boats she carries, which is to a certain extent the measure of the size of the crew, and other circumstances.

A usual scheme of wages is about as follows: Captain, one-twelfth; first mate, one-twentieth; seeond mate, one-thirtieth; third mate, one-forty-fifth; fifth mate, who is generally a boatsteerer, one-sixty-fifth; boatsteerer, one-eightieth; cooper, one-fiftieth; cook, one-one hundred and twentieth; steward, one-one hundredth; blacksmith, one-one hundred and sixtieth; foremast hands, one-one hundred and sixty-fifth, and green hands one-one hundred and eightieth.

In addition to deductions made from the "lay" of the crew is the cost of loading the vessel and discharging the cargo, about twelve dollars each. This, however, varies, according to circumstances. It is not very often that ships return "clean;" there is always enough to cover expenses, and save owners, unless something extraordinary happens to break up all calculations. Sometimes the vessel is wrecked, sometimes delayed for some reason over which captains have no control.

The captain generally makes the crew understand

that he is going to take command of the ship and that no one must have an opinion but himself, unless he asks for one from one of his officers. The demands of the captain, in this respect, cannot be better understood than to give them in the words of a writer on the whale fisheries, in which he supposes a captain addressing the crew just before sailing:

"Now, my men, I suppose you all know what we are here for. We have started for a cargo of oil, and I expect every man will do his best. First, I want a good, sharp, lookout kept, and sing out for everything you see. Go when you are sent, come when you are called, and always repeat the order given you. You shall have enough to eat of what is in the ship, but I want nothing wasted. If your food is not properly cooked, or if you do not get enough of it, come to me, and I will see that you do have enough, and that it is properly cooked. I want no growling with the cook. No fighting on board. If any of you want to fight, come to me, and I will attend to your case. Now, boatsteerers, your place is abaft the try-works, bear that in mind. I want you to sing out for everything you see from the masthead if it is nothing more than a porpoise. You will have two chances; if you miss them, you cannot have any more aboard this ship."

The above is about what our captain acted; he said not much, he was not a talker, and consequently, everyone was on the lookout. There was nothing in sight, and all were blue. Captain Folsom looked

as glum as if he were attending the funeral of a rich relation without hope of having been remembered, and the crew was in a state of general disappointment.

If there is one place more calculated to develope the various crooked places in the nature of men than another, that spot is the narrow limits of a ship, from stem to stern. Things trifling in themselves that might and do occur out in the broad wide world without attention, become unbearable when happening day after day on shipboard, allowing all the space from cathead to taffrail, and beam from port to starboard rail, the forecastle included.

The men think it their special province to "growl," and each man's growl has a separate and independent character of its own, shaped after the individuality of the growler. One gives his opinion, without solicitation, in no complimentary terms of the "salt horse" and other fare with which he is furnished, another has decided views on the condition of the fok'sle and its pleasures of rats and roaches, especially those black, winged roaches, as large as a tom-tit, which flit through the vitiated atmosphere reeking with bad odors, created in part by the single swinging slush lamp which but serves to make darkness more visible; a third is full of superstition, putting forth in bad English in an oracular way all sorts of prognostics, condemning the ship, the voyage, the captain and mates, and, nearly always on a whaler, these moods take color

from the inactivity occasioned by the absence of the prey which they have come in search of, and on which depends whether they will be richer or poorer when the voyage comes to an end.

The returned whaleman always growls at his "lay," be it much or little. If it is a "long lay," he believes it should have been a short one, and in any event he is sure it should have been much more, and religiously believes he has been cheated; if the vessel returns with a part cargo, he as firmly thinks he has been swindled. Jack is not a businessman, and hence does not comprehend a system of bookkeeping that leaves him nothing after he has put in his two or three years time on boardship.

They all declare, seasoned with profanity, that never again will a whaler catch them. But, notwithstanding this, he is off again on the same ship, perhaps, with nothing but a former experience to back him up. If you ask him why he has shipped again, he will give you no answer, probably, except that here he is. But in the recesses of his slow working brain there is a dim spectre that he may get even somehow.

An able bodied seaman named Hawsrig, one of the crew of the Peri, a hulking fellow given to "sojering" and other marine tricks to escape duty as much as possible, was one of those men who always shipped again.

He was indulging in a prolonged growl one night in the middle watch. We were lying in shelter of

the boat-davits, from which a boat was hanging, when this fellow abruptly asked:

"Johnnie, what did ye come to sea for?"

"Because I wanted to be a sailor," I replied.

"Ye 'll be sorry ye ever was a sailorman, leastwise, a fok'sle hand."

I did not care to have his views as to myself, so I set him to talking by asking him why he had shipped, when he let out a string of grievances.

"Well, I dunno, I 'spose it's 'cause I'm not fit for nothin' else. When this vyage is up, that'll make four times, an' I'm poorer now nor when I fust started a sailorin'. Ef a feller makes a little, the blasted boardin' masters gits it all away from him. He's a shark of a feller, that boardin' master; but while ye has money he's pleasant like until he gits ye in debt an' robs ye again, an' then ye has to ship where he tells ye. Ef ye ain't willin', why, then he gits ye drunk an' shanghais ye."

"Why don't you go to a respectable boarding house when you go ashore?" I suggested.

"How kin a man go to a 'spectable house when he ain't got no frens an' no money. Ef a man goes ashore from his ship arter a long vyage an' has any money, the boardin' master's runner falls foul of him, talks sweet, inwites him to drink, an' then—I 'spose ye know what a appetite fur rum is," and he looked into my face as if he expected me to say something. I replied:

"Thank God, I do not. Bnt why don't you refuse to drink?"

"Refuse!" repeated the man, as if it were a preposterous suggestion, and, as if a new light had dawned upon him at the very idea of a refusal under such circumstances, "Refuse! How kin a man refuse when he ain't got no frien's, and the boardin' master makes himself out a saint, sayin' his house is the only one where a sailorman kin hev a fair show?"

There was a great deal of truth in this, but I said:

"You should keep away from such temptation."

"Yes, that's easy fur a man what ain't got no appetite fur the stuff. Why, ef they wants ter git ye to ship, an' ye won't drink, they puts it in youre wittles, so to give ye a taste; an' then—"

Just then the relieving watch came on deck and we went below to turn in, the conversation never being resumed. I thought how true it all is, but how much of it is due to Hawsrig's own shiftless ways.

CHAPTER XVI.

CAPTURING A WHALE.

I HAD my own ambitions, and, consequently, learned to enjoy what was enjoyable, and to squeeze a little pleasure out of all that was disagreeable. I was now as good a sailor as any man in the Peri, excepting the captain and first mate—at least, I thought so, and could take my trick at the wheel, do my work aloft or below, and was not aware that any fault could be found with me.

There are always antagonisms arising among forecastlemen, and it was my misfortune to meet mine when I came across and lived a short time with a shipmate named Guy. He was a Pennsylvanian, and this was his second voyage. He was a good sailor, and had the place of boat-steerer—we were natural antagonists. That feeling had leaped, as it were, into the minds of both of us the moment we met, which was on a yard arm, and heard each other's voices. Guy was a bully, and generally in a row with some one of the crew.

I had avoided him as much as possible, although I knew that sooner or later I would have to give him a lesson in good behavior. He had a habit of saying ugly things, which he thought smart and witty, as we passed each other on the deck or hap-

pened to be close together aloft; especially was he aggravating when we were reefing or furling.

It was not so much what he said, as his manner of saying it—he was always carrying a chip on his shoulder for some one to knock off. One of the strong points in my nature was to resist a nickname—I would neither give one nor have one applied to me.

One of Guy's favorite taunts was in paraphrasing my name—he would call me Slowstep. This nettled me, but I did not care to fight with him, although I believed I could whip him.

However, I never thought fighting a good way to settle differences, at least, until all other means were exhausted. I happened one day to strike upon Guy's almost single weakness as to anything like sensibility, and that was his extreme sensitiveness to ridicule. This hint came from a bout of words between him and one of the men, in which Guy was immediately quieted down by some ridicule the men heaped upon him, and which drove him from the forecastle at the time.

This I stored up, awaiting some chance to put him in a ridiculous position. One Sunday, we were all lounging about hoping for news from the mast-head. That day we had a right fair dinner, for sea fare, it being "lobscouse" and roast pork, followed by "plum duff" served with molasses.

Lobscouse is a very palatable dish when made carefully, as our cook handled it, and is composed of hardtack and salt meat chopped fine, to which is

added whatever vegetable that may be available, all seasoned liberally with salt and pepper.

To this mess water is added, and as the pot boils it is stirred together with a large iron spoon until done, when it is served hot.

Duff is made simply of flour and water, to which on festive occasions raisins are added, being boiled and served hot with sauce made with vinegar or molasses.

We were seated in the forecastle on our chests, or wherever a place could be found, talking, eating and chaffing each other, when Guy, after having a crack at several of the men, commenced on me, saying, "Quickstep, you're always slowstep, except at dinner-time. When there's any eating to be done you're quickstep; but when there's work you're slowstep," after which he laughed immoderately.

The charge was not true, and, the men looking at me as if they expected me to resent it, I thought now my time has come, although I did not know just what I was going to do. We had gotten through with the dinner, the substantial part of it, and were just commencing on the duff, which stood on the deck in front of each man in a pannikin, swimming in molasses. Guy, in a good humor with himself, kept at me as though he had found a but for his jokes who would not resist.

Suddenly, I put both hands into the vessel containing my duff, grabbed the whole mess in both hands, and with a powerful throw landed it full

in his face. It struck him about the middle part of his forehead, the dough and molasses streaming down his face and over his clothes. The men all roared and jeered, but Guy was too busy with his extra allowance of duff to appreciate the joke.

After he had wiped the mess off carefully, during which time I imagined he was collecting his thoughts, his anger increasing the while. He finally found his tongue, saying in a threatening attitude:

"I'll get even with you for this."

I went up to him, rubbed my hands, yet reeking with the contents of the pannikin, over his face and cheeks, at the same time answering his threat:

"Very well, we had better settle it right now, and unless you promise never to annoy me again, I will give you something you won't be able to get in a candy store."

The chests were all pushed aside, the men forming a ring, in the gloomy forecastle, with the expectation of seeing a fight—Jack is always ready to see a fight. But there was no fight in Guy. Ridicule had completely mastered him, and he beat a hasty retreat up the companion ladder, the men calling after him:

"Good-bye, Mr. Duff." Ever after, when he undertook to indulge in his bullying propensity he was immediately squelched by some one saying: "Now, Mr. Duff." He steered clear of me ever after that.

We had been slipping along quiety after this

event for about three weeks with the monotony of the forecastle life unbroken, when suddenly, like a streak of lightning from a summer sky, the cry rang from the masthead in joyous tones, "There she blows!"

"Where away," demanded the officer of the deck.

"About two miles away, over the lee quarter." shouted the lookout.

The ship was hauled aback at once and all was bustle and excitement, each one realizing that now had come the time for action.

"Masthead," shouted the mate to the man aloft, "do you see him?"

"Yes, sir; blows again in a spout a little further to the leeward."

"All right," answered the deck. "Hoist and swing the boats, my men. We must get this first one."

The boats were lowered and manned, each one taking his proper station, and away went all of them. In less than a jiffy, as the sailors express it, the boats were in pursuit of that whale, or some other one that might show up, seen from the masthead.

The oars bent under the lusty strokes of the anxious men, spurning the waters and sending a beaded ruffle of water aft, the boats bounding away, each one emulous of striking the whale first. A boatsteerer was in the head of each boat, stand-

ing erect, and directing by a wave of his hand which way the steersman was to point the boat.

The whale was not to be seen. It was either "gallied" or was remaining an undue length of time under water. Presently it came to the surface, and close to the boats. The death-dealing iron is poised, and Guy, who was in the head of the boat, the devil in his eye, launched the iron swift and sure, it entering the whale and "fastening" the boat. Away went the monster, and out went the line, three hundred fathom, at a tremendous speed, a heating pace, which necessitated pouring water on it, where it ran through the chocks, to keep it from burning.

Guy had taken his place in the stern sheets, as steersman, which is the boatsteerer's place after he has struck the whale, and it was "good and fast."

All at once the line slacked up, and the maddened animal "showed," heading directly for the boat. As he approached and came within throwing distance, two more irons were put into him. We had fastened to a huge sperm whale—an old bull, as vicious as Satan. The wounds enraged him, and, slowing down for an instant, as they say of steamers, he lashed the waters, breaking them into a bloody foam, as though gathering force to attack his enemies, when another iron admonished him that it was time to "fin out."

The last iron had gone into his life, but he was still lively and bent on mischief. He started to run the second time, when "stern all" was given

which turned him, and he came straight for the boat, striking it with his immense head square amidships, with all the fury and apparent malice, often shown by the sperm whale.

As he struck the boat, as though guided by a spirit of revenge, up it went, about thirty feet, in a burst of water, broken timbers, oars and men, not enough being left of the boat to offer a suggestion of repair, or indeed, to tell what it had been. The crew flew into the air with the fragments of boat, and were soon struggling in the sea amid the wreck, and whatever else was floatable, striving, not only to save themselves from drowning, but, also from the fury of the maddened monster. After the boat was stove the whale started off again but not so strong. The remaining boats rescued the crew, all but two of them, (Frenchy and Guy), who were never seen again after the boat was stove.

It was now nearly dark and the whale still going, though feebly. When the boat with the rescued men reached him and sent another iron into his carcass, the capture was then complete. His dying throes broke the water into blood-colored foam, when he "flurried" and "finned out," that is, gave up the ghost.

Often a whale seems dead, when, suddenly, signs of life appear, and an expiring effort is made, doing much damage in trying to get away. So that, when it is not certain that the prey is dead, another iron is jammed into him to make sure, and,

if he does not flinch, he is made fast and towed to the ship.

The bowhead, when struck, sometimes does great damage to boats and men, staving boats, crippling men, and so on; but it is generally from a clumsy effort to escape and not from any instinct of revenge. But the sperm whale seems to be in such cases actuated by a thinking power, which aims to destroy those who attack it. He has been known to run a tilt at a ship, striking it and causing it to leak.

The exciting capture was ended, and it proved to be an eighty-barrel one. It was made fast to all of the boats, tandem, and the towing to the ship commenced. We towed it head foremost, as it moves easier that way, the involuntary action of the flukes operating as a propeller, aiding progress through the water. A piece of line six or seven feet long was rove through a hole cut in the whale's head close to the blow hole, and two or more boats started to the ship, which remained hove to, awaiting our arrival.

The speed was very slow, about two miles an hour, and it was long after dark when the vessel was reached, all being wet, tired, hungry, and sad over the loss of our shipmates.

It was a great grief to all hands that two men had been lost, and especially to myself, that Guy was one of them, against whom I had no enmity, but with whom I had so lately had a difficulty in the forecastle on the occasion of our Sunday dinner.

But the whaleman's life is in jeopardy whenever he enters a boat in pursuit of a whale—it may happen, and it may not. The calling is, in all its phases, a dangerous one, but is very enticing for its adventure, and it is this that leads many young men to the adoption of it.

I was led to become a sailor, not from any special knowledge or any peculiarities connected with the life of a whaler, but because of an inherent love of adventure, and, besides, a positive distaste for any kind of shore business. After I got my sea legs on, and began to learn my duties, though a bit irksome, I was more determined than ever to complete my apprenticeship, and to put myself in the line of promotion, in order to carry out the original idea of becoming captain of a ship, and so escape the horrid life and associations of the forecastle. But, after all, with its many hardships, the life of a whaler is full of activity and adventure—in short, it has a charm difficult to understand.

CHAPTER XVII.

CUTTING IN.

CUTTING in is the operation of stripping the blubber from the carcass of a whale after it is towed alongside the ship, made fast, and hoisted on board for trying-out, or rendering into oil.

There are two kinds of whales, as the reader knows, the sperm whale containing only oil, and the whalebone whale—comprising large and small animals—the "bowhead" being the largest and most important in a money sense. The cutting in of a sperm whale differs from the same operation upon the "bowhead," for that is to secure the product of oil and bone. I will endeavor to give the manner of each as intelligently as possible in the limit of a chapter.

The sperm whale has no bone, commercially speaking, but has in each side of the under jaw about twenty-two strong, white, partially-pointed teeth, which are of no great value, except as they may be used in manufactures not requiring large and fine ivory. These teeth fit into the lower jaw closely together, and into a recess, or groove, in the upper jaw, which is without teeth.

The head, being about one-third the size of the whole body, contains an oil which is somewhat

more valuable than that obtained from the blubber. This is dipped out with a "case bucket" after the head has been cut off and hoisted on board, when a hole is morticed in it large enough to admit the bucket.

The whalebone whales have no teeth, properly speaking, as the construction of their jaws and manner of feeding do not require teeth. The bow-head has a large number of fringed plates, or slabs, suspended from the upper jaw, which are about three feet long at the angle of the mouth, and from sixteen to eighteen feet at the deepest part of the jaw. This is the whalebone of commerce, is very valuable and is used in the manufacture of whips, canes, corset stays, and many other things useful and ornamental.

As soon as the capture is made by the boats, which is known to the ship by a code of signals, or sighted from the masthead, that part of the crew which has been left in charge of the ship to work her and keep off-and-on while the boats are in chase, commence preparing for cutting in, provided it is determined to render the blubber at once without waiting for another whale to be captured.

The cutting tackle is overhauled and mastheaded, a gangway opened on the starboard side and a cutting-in stage slung over the ship's side, overhanging the water: cutting spades, boarding knives, and all necessary tools are placed in readiness on deck, that there may be no delay in getting to

work when the carcass is brought alongside and properly made fast.

Being alongside, preparations are made for tackling on to it by a "fluke-chain" and "head-rope," the flukes of the animal pointing forward on the starboard side under the cutting-in stage. After securing the carcass the fluke-chain and head-rope are adjusted, rove through a port and belayed to a post, or bit, as the sailors call it, when the men commence stripping the blubber from the whale.

It was about eleven o'clock the next day when the whale was in position alongside for the attack. The men were called to dinner, so that, when they did begin, there could no "knocking off" work until all the blubber was housed, and for fear too, that it might "blast," which means to spoil, or that the weather might become rough and stormy, thus increasing the difficulty of getting the stuff on board; or, again, that the boats might be lowered away in pursuit of other whales which might show up to the man on the look-out from the "crow's nest."

The head was cut off, and divided into three parts by imaginary lines known to whalemen, the upper part, immediately below the spout-hole is the "case," containing an oil of a different quality than that obtained from the blubber, and of greater value, amounting sometimes to as much as fifteen barrels. The "junk" which is a great mass of cartilaginous matter, tough, elastic and fat, and the

"whitehorse," a singular name, lying between the junk and the lower line of the upper jaw.

The carcass, in order to secure all the blubber with as little time and labor as possible, was marked off with lines, spirally, around the circumference, and, by these lines, the outside covering was cut and torn, both, from the carcass, which is made to turn in the water, as the windlass is revolved, by an ingenious adjustment of ropes and tackle, until all the blubber is taken off, leaving a red meat covering the skeleton.

This red meat is not a bad-flavored one, when fresh, tasting something like coarse beef, though stronger and redder. If it were attempted to remove the fatty covering from one side of the whale at a time, there would be some danger of losing it, besides requiring more time and labor to accomplish the operation.

When the blubber is all inboard and stored the head is brought to the gangway, a tackle clapped on to it, and, when a large one, it is hoisted high enough above the surface of the water to separate the junk from the case, hoisted on board and hove up to the plank shear; an opening large enough is made in it to admit the case bucket, when the head matter is bailed out. The process of trying out is the same for both animals.

The procedure of stripping the whale now being ended, the blubber on board, and no whales being in sight, the work of rendering begins. The fat comes from the carcass in long strips called "blanket

pieces," and these are divided into chunks from fifteen to eighteen inches long by six to eight inches broad, called "horse pieces."

These are then dropped into a "strap-tub," and taken to a machine known as a mincing horse, where it is cut into small bits and dropped into a mincing tub. From the mincing tub it is pitched into the try-pot, with a blubber fork, and boiled into oil. The contents of the try-pot are stirred frequently to keep it from settling to the bottom and burning. When the scraps which float to the top show brown enough, and the expert whaleman knows from appearances, to indicate that the oil is well tried out, they are skimmed off with a perforated dipper and dropped into a scrap hopper that the remaining oil may drip away.

These scraps are used under the try-pot for fuel. The whole operation of trying out is exactly similar to what every farmer does in the Fall of the year at what is called "hog-killing" time, and rendering into lard the fat of the hog.

From the try-pot the oil is ladled into large cooling coppers, from where it passes, when cooled, through a hose into casks which are already stowed and then bunged. Formerly it was the practice to draw the oil off into a deck-pot, and from there into casks on deck, where it was bunged, rolled away and lashed to the ship's rail. Now, however, the casks are lowered into the hold empty, and filled as they are stowed in layers, thus avoiding

the labor and time of lowering them full and stowing them away.

When the trying-out is being rapidly done, as it is when the hold is full of blubber, the casks are often filled with oil that is not sufficiently cooled off. The heat causes them to leak, and the cooper is kept busy driving hoops to prevent leakage until the oil cools. The case oil is put into barrels by itself, sometimes without boiling, but carefully scalded, together with the junk and a portion of the hump, and put away marked "head matter."

After the blubber is tried out and stowed below, the decks are cleaned up with a lye made of the ashes from the furnace beneath the try-pot. The ship is thoroughly cleaned, the deck washed and holy-stoned—at least, the holy-stone was used on the decks of the Peri, though I believe it is not the custom among whaling captains generally. The grimy clothing of the crew is washed and hung out to dry, seized to one of the stays, and, fore and aft, cleanliness prevails, to be upset again, however, by the next cry of "There she blows."

In the early days of whaling, when all the fishing grounds were replete with the monster game, from Boston to the Brazils, ships often caught more whales than could be "cut in" and tried out before "blasting;" but in these days of active competition, when the game is hunted from one haunt to another, the numbers growing less or the prey going no one knows where, the term "blubber-

logged," that is, more than can be utilized, is no longer in vogue.

But a small vessel, having good luck, (and nearly all now engaged in the trade are of moderate dimensions,) sometimes fills up with oil, and after that, if more whales are captured the whalebone is taken from the head, and the carcass sent adrift to become the property of whoever picks it up, or it is eaten by the sharks. It is oftener, however, devoured by these ravenous monsters if the carcass does not sink. When the ship is full of blubber and another whale is captured, the bone secured and the carcass cast loose, the captain and crew almost weep to see, perhaps, a hundred-barrel whale drifting away.

At present whales are so scarce, even on the Arctic grounds, that no chance is taken of having one escape, consequently all the storage-room below is choke-full with blubber before the try-works are fired up—that is, as long as a whale is to be had. When the "spouts" become infrequent, or cease to become frequent enough to encourage the lowering of the boats, operations commence at the try-pot.

The try-pot is a large iron vessel holding a great many gallons—I never knew just how many,—inclosed in substantial brick work just aft of the foremast, and all held together by iron braces and wood-work, under which is the fire furnace. One would think the sea, in case of a storm, would wash it overboard and send it flying into a thousand

pieces over the rail or through the bulwark; but that seldom happens.

Years ago it was believed that the *habitat* of the sperm whale was in the depths of the ocean—it only coming to the surface occasionally—and that it was peculiar to temperate latitudes. But it has been seen and caught in every ocean, except the frozen regions.

In former years, all along the coast of California, from San Diego to the Mexican line, on to Panama and off the coasts of Peru and Chile, were prolific whaling grounds. The Bay of Monterey was at one time famous for the whale fisheries established there permanently; but the fishing was prosecuted with such vigor that the whales ceased to resort to that locality as breeding grounds. There became in reality more whalers than whales, and the works of capturing and trying out went to ruin for lack of occupation.

There was a small whale called the "California Grayback," which frequented the bayous all along the coast of California. They congregated in great numbers in any inlet that afforded them swimming room, as these were the breeding places selected, by some instinct which prompted them, to crowd such places for having their young. The Grayback had, and still has, as a remembrance, the reputation of having been a devil incarnate in his temperament and ability for damage and destruction, to his captors and their boats. It is now extinct on this coast, so far as profitable pursuit is concerned.

CHAPTER XVIII.

MYSTERIES OF THE SEA.

No landsman can have an adequate idea of the vicissitudes which surround the life of a mariner, of the mysteries which can never be explained even by those who go down to the sea in ships, whether they go from choice or necessity, or of the dangers that are ever imminent, though not visible, ready to launch their furies as fate may have ordained.

The current history of life, the daily papers, relates to its readers that such and such ships are due in port; then comes the appalling announcement that they are overdue and probably lost, after which commences a series of theories to account for their non-arrival. But, all of a sudden, a new wonder springs up and conjecture is silenced in favor of the latest excitement; the vessels are never heard of again, and those who were on board of them are never heard of more, but are given up for lost; the forms of grief are gone through with, time partially curing the affliction. The memory of the ill-fated vessels, and those who embarked in them, passengers and crew, become a part of the mystery of the unfathomed deep.

What, it may be pertinently asked, becomes of

all the never-returning ships which put to sea in command of experienced captains and carefully-selected crews? They are certainly not stolen by captains who convert them to their own use, changing names and identity, thus becoming owners without going through the mercantile forms of barter and sale; for the record of every vessel and every boat, above a certain tonnage, is compelled by the laws of our country to have a registry which is known all over the world. They are not carried off by mutinous crews and scuttled, for sailors are not generally navigators, and if they were, detection would most likely follow. They do not turn pirates, for the occupation of the sea-rover is a thing of the past.

Of course, then, if they are never heard of again after leaving the port of departure, they must founder in some violent storm or terrible accident, giving no time for those on board to escape; or, if escaping into the boats, they may even then go to the bottom with the ships; or, sadder still, may be burned with all on board, leaving none to tell the story of disaster and death by fire or storm.

To a seaman, only, is it possible to conjure up scenes of disaster, such as his daily life at sea teach him to know, of dire events happening on the limitless ocean. Let us try and account for some of the disappearances of staunch ships from the surface of the great oceans.

A ship sails, the officers and crew full of the hope of a short and prosperous voyage. For

weeks the wind and weather are propitious, the sails swelling out from the tapering masts filled with a power which moves the hull toward its destination. Suddenly an odor of something burning comes to the senses of those on board; a curling film of smoke ascends heavenward, from no one knows where as yet, the precursor of a dreadful fate.

The sea runs in mountains, the officers and crew are terror-stricken, and the passengers crowd the deck in the depth of despair. The pumps refuse to work, from long disuse, and buckets are brought into requisition, as though pigmies might combat a hydra-headed monster. The film of smoke increases to a dense and blinding substance, uniting with the floating clouds above, and then, thicker and thicker, until everything is enveloped, polluting the atmosphere of the deck.

Fire bursts out from unexpected places, writhing with flaming tongues of forked destruction, when the startling cry is wrung from agonized souls, "The ship is on fire!" The flames run like maddened fiends, leaping from deck to rigging, from rigging to sails, until the beautiful structure is a pyramid of fire with the consuming hull as a base. The decks are glowing, too hot for human endurance, and the wind rages in unison with sea and flame. The boats are lowered, but swamped with their human freight as soon as cast off; those who are in them struggle in vain for a few moments

with the angry ocean and all are lost—sinking to rise no more until the final day.

The sea is illumined for a space round the burning fabric, like a haze of thick weather, which in a few hours consumes to the surface of the sea—sinking into fathoms of depth. The owners await the return of the venture they have sent out with their money; relatives keep silent vigil until the pulse of hope grows-weaker, dying out in despair.

Again. The night is of cimmerian hue; the ship has lost her reckoning, the gale driving the sea into mountain billows. Two men stand at the wheel. The storm-king rides upon the blast, rioting in all the fury of his might to fulfill a destiny already shaped out. All at once, with dismay in his ghastly tone, the lookout at the bow cries, in a voice of despair, "Breakers ahead!" All is commotion. An attempt is made to put the ship about. It is too late, and she goes crashing into a reef of rocks, pounding her life out to the shriek of the storm, until every timber groans as though it were human.

The boats are lowered, but swept away as though impelled by the invisible hand of some giant power. The men climb into the rigging. The masts are wrenched from their steps, adding the thunder of their fall to that of the vengeful tempest. Men are washed overboard, wounded, maimed, drowned. When daylight comes, the sea is toying with its victim. Not a soul is left to witness the floating wreckage swelling about the reef upon which the ill-fated vessel drove to destruction.

The owners at home figure up in their ledgers the cost of the vessel and cargo, the expenses of the voyage, leaving out of the calculation what may be the expenditure in human life, and await in vain to fill out the completed account. The mourners sit at the desolate fireside in loving expectancy, until "hope deferred sickeneth the soul."

Again. A ship takes in her freight, and a crew is shipped. The rattling of the chain-cable rings out to the clank of the windlass pauls, as the anchor is broken from its hold on the bottom, to the heave of the sailors, chanting a song of hope and safe return. Farewell greetings are exchanged, and the vessel goes flying on her journey, the white wings of commerce spread to the favoring winds, dashing over the tossing wave for a port she shall never reach.

Some brutality of the captain, perhaps of the other officers, too, or, an idle superstition has taken possession of the crew. Some of them refuse to do duty, and the offending men are put in irons and sent below. The remaining ones sympathize with their fellows, demanding their release. The captain refuses, when the whole crew revolt; undisguised mutiny stalks the deck, and all hands refuse to put hand to work. The captain undertakes to coerce those who are not in irons, when the mutineers takes possession of the ship.

Liquor is broached, drunkenness ensues, and the officers are murdered. The men have no knowledge of navigation and become frightened at their

own deeds. They victual and water the boats, and, scuttling the ship, sail away quarreling among themselves. They are, perhaps, lost, or, reaching land somewhere, pass themselves off for shipwrecked seamen. The ship fills and disappears from the blue ocean. There remains no tell-tale hull as a message to those who are waiting at home to receive the loved ones who shall never appear.

All sailors know the dangers of the sea, owners of ships groan at their losses in ships and cargoes, and marine insurance companies pay annual losses to large amounts on vessels which seemed a fair risk, but which never return to the home port. Occasionally a piece of wreckage is picked up at sea, by which the fate of a long overdue ship may be known; a peculiar spar, or figure-head, or name-board is seen floating, the gilded letters glinting in the sun as the remaining splinter of a once noble hull mounts to the crest of a snow-capped billow as if in search of some lost thing, but sinking back into valleys of dark green water.

Our old hulk was bowling along four or five knots an hour, with a rattling breeze over the port bow, the yards braced round jam against the rigging, under close-reefed topsails, reefed foresail and foretopmast-staysail and double-reefed spanker. The sea now and again gave the starboard bow a blow solid with a bank of water which sent a wash aboard and a salt spray half way to the foremast-head, which descended to the deck in drenching showers, and ran in a mad race to the lee scup-

pers, where they struggled in great seething bubbles to escape.

This sort of weather continued for three days and nights with fitful squalls and alternate taking off and putting on sail. All expected that the ship would have to be stripped of every inch of canvas, and let scud under bare poles. But the weather continued about the same, and on the fourth day we were able to carry more sail, until we were staggering under everything except to'gallant-sails and royals. The royals had been clewed up, and one of the boys was ordered aloft to furl the main royal, which was blowing loose and slatting about. When he got up as far as the to'gallant masthead, he found that his shoes were too heavy and would not permit him to go higher, and, slipping down to the main top, he took them off and started again, shinned it up to the royal yard, stowing the sail away in sailor-like fashion.

The wind gradually died away, when more sail was put on, and, by noon, there was scarcely wind enough to disturb a feather. There was a bank of fog rolling up which either indicated a wet time or a storm. It grew thicker and thicker until it completely enveloped our craft; it was of that density that nothing could be seen through it. The masts were hidden, the rigging only supposable. There was a faint whiteness where the sails hung upon the masts and yards, but it was impossible to see faces or forms upon the deck.

The fog settled down over us in a solid bank. It

was a wet solitude, the gunwales were a part of the fog bank, and the sea merged into the fog. The man at the wheel was the only one who could be located, except the lookout at the bow, and they seemed like drenched phantoms. It was so still, so solemn, so much of a solitude, that there was scarcely any use of a lookout. Not a sound was heard, except a soft slopping of the sea as it ran aft along the vessel's sides.

This condition of weather lasted until about ten o'clock at night, when the fog melted away before the pressure of a feeble breeze, which gradually increased to a good stiff one, filling the sails and starting the idle old hulk again on its way. The moon appeared in her silver glory, sailing across a wide expanse of blue sky, and the stars came out of the azure ground of the heavens, as though there was some magic in their movements, studding the celestial vault with points and streaks, and streams of polished silver. The next day we had light winds and rain, the weather settling down again into the same sort of a fog we had experienced the day before.

But it cleared away again, and so remained for about two weeks, when a spout was seen from the masthead. The boats were lowered, and soon we were in pursuit of a whale. The boats got fast to him, and when he was converted into oil, we had about eighty more barrels to add to our cargo.

CHAPTER XIX.

WHALE-BOATS.

THE whale-boat is unlike any other boat in existence. It has some of the lines of a boat, as boat-builders call the form; but the one used for capturing whales has lines peculiarly its own, and appurtenances which have grown out of the combined experience of as many years as the fraternity of whalemen is old, and is better adapted for just what it has developed into than any other form of boat yet conceived. The world will be much older before any modification of importance takes place in its shape and construction unless steam whale-boats should supersede them, which is not probable.

Should steam take the place of oars, sail and muscle in the chase and capture of the oily leviathan, there would of necessity be some modification in its shape and construction.

The present shape, build and adaptation to the business of whaling cannot, it is agreed, be improved upon. The construction of this boat is a matter of the closest calculation; the beam, the length, the position of the thwarts, the length of the oars, the height of the sides above the sea, the shear of the "gunnel" from amidships to both ends of the clipper-like thing, are the result of a

varied experience, acquired by whalemen engaged in active pursuit of the whale.

The combined points are all designed for speed, safety and facility of movement, in either direction, to meet the vicissitudes of the dangerous and venturesome occupation of whaling.

Steam whale-boats have been employed to some extent, but the objection has been that the escaping steam makes so much noise as to "galley" the whale when going on to it. The uses of the steam whale-boat, which is built somewhat like a man-of-war launch, and not like the beautiful and clean-built double-end whale-boat, has so far been used for towing the regular ship's boats quickly to the vicinity of the whale to be struck; for towing the dead whale to the ship, and, also, for chasing wounded whales which have broken loose after being fastened to. From their maintained speed a wounded whale is not apt to escape from them in open water.

These steam-launches are about twenty-eight feet long, with an upright boiler, using coal as a fuel. The whale-boat proper is from twenty-eight to thirty feet long, clean lined as a bird and resting on the water as daintily as a duck, topping the waves with as much ease as that aquatic fowl. The heaviest parts of the structure are the gunwales, keel and stem, and stern posts, which are equivalent to the arch and keystone of a spanning structure, binding the whole together and imparting that strength and stiffness to the entire fabric which is

so important to the trials and dangers it must undergo.

The planking is white cedar, inch and a half thick, and the timbers are of some hard wood three-quarters of an inch thick, not sawn, but steamed into shape in a steam chest, such as every boat builder has as a part of his establishment.

The thwarts are generally of one-and-a-quarter inch pine, having their bearing on steamed knees of great strength, securely fastened. The forward, or bow-oar thwart, is made with a hole in it, through which the mast is put and secured into a step underneath. This thwart rests upon a double row of substantial knees to give it strength, that sail may be carried when occasion requires; the knees are made of steamed hacmatack.

At the forward end of the boat, through what is called the "cuddy-board" is a conical-shaped post called "logger-head," designed for checking the line when it is running out too fast, and a deep groove in the stem, fitted with a roller, or something stationary, which may be replaced when worn out, for the safe delivery of the line when fast to a running whale, and going at a speed of ten miles an hour.

A certain space in the bow contains a box in which is coiled the line, on to which the harpoon is bent. Back of this box is a securely-fastened thick plank, the "clumsycleat," having an opening against which the boat-steerer braces his knee to give him purchase in throwing the iron.

On the gunwale the tholepins are placed, made of hard wood, and put at proper distances, in which the oars may have room to play; the oars are kept well greased, and muffled with mats, so that in approaching a whale they may make as little noise as possible, letting the boat sneak upon the prey without "galleying" it and causing it to run away.

As silence and celerity are essential conditions of capture, great care is taken that the boats are in a condition to glide over the water with as little friction as possible, to the end that the prey may not escape. Therefore, the planking outside, and the bottom also, is, or ought to be, kept perfectly smooth by frequent sand-papering and painting.

The equipment of the boat when in chase consists of a line tub, in which is coiled three hundred fathoms of line, one thousand eight hundred feet, and so coiled as to prevent any mishap in running out, such as kinking in the outrun as the whale dashes away infuriated with the "iron" in his huge carcass, a mast and sprit-sail, and five oars.

The harpoon oars, and after oars, are fourteen feet long, the tub, and bow, oars sixteen feet long, and the midship oars eighteen feet long, being so placed that the two shorter ones and one of the longest pull against two sixteen-foot oars, thus keeping the boat balanced during the chase, encounter and capture. This is when the boat is propelled by four oars, the harpoon oar being "a peak"—the boat is steered with a twenty-two foot oar, working through a grommet on the stern post.

The gear of the boat is "live harpoons," that is, those in use, including the one bent on to the line. The spare irons are made fast fore-and-aft of the boat inside the "gunnel" above the thwarts, and lances are secured in the same way. These are all kept sharp and protected by sheaths of soft wood.

The head of the harpoon is a straight, triangular iron secured by a rivet to the shank of the socket. Into the socket is inserted a stout staff of hard, green wood about six feet long. Sometimes the head of the harpoon is a long, narrow strip of iron made fast to the socket by a rivet, so that before it is thrown into the whale it is on a line with the shank; but, when it enters the blubber and the line tautens, the blade drops to a right-angled position, making it more difficult to draw out when the whale runs.

The upper part of the shank is about thirty inches long, having a socket into which is fitted a green oak or hickory pole about six feet long. An "eye-splice," made of whale line, is wrapped below the socket, so that it won't slip.

In the bow of the boat are put a water-keg, lantern, candles, a compass, and a hatchet within easy reach of the boat-steerer in case he is obliged to cut loose. Everything necessary to dress wounds is stored in a safe place in case of accident; also, flags for signaling, a fluke-spade, boat-hook and drag. Into the boat, when in chase of a whale, are crowded all of the above, with six men, which, to a

greenhorn, look as though they had been thrown in helter-skelter.

On the contrary, so disastrous is the result if anything goes wrong, that all is arranged in order, to act a certain part in the capture. Sometimes, however, in the haste to respond to the cry of "There she blows!" mistakes are made, and accidents which may cost one or more lives are the result.

The whale-boat used by the Esquimaux is best adapted to their style of fishing, for the reason that they whale from the shore, not having a storing-place for the blubber as the whale-ship has. When they kill a whale it is towed ashore.

The Esquimaux boat, called a "*baidarka*" is very peculiar in its construction. First, a frame is made of wooden strips lashed together with green thongs of walrus hide. This is left to dry, and, the thongs, shrinking as they dry, draw the parts of the frame closely and stiffly together, making it firmer and more compact than if put together with nails, after which the frame is covered with green walrus hide, which takes the place of planking on an ordinary boat; and this is left to dry thoroughly, the hide shrinking into all the inequalities of the structure, occasioned by the peculiar construction of the frame, and binding the whole together into a most serviceable boat.

The "*baidarka*" is from twenty-five to thirty feet long, carrying generally eight men. The harpoons of the Esquimaux are made of ivory, with a

sharp point of slate, stone or iron. The equipment of the "*baidarka*" is a mast, which serves a double purpose, being used to stretch the sail, and, also, as a staff for the harpoon; a large knife and eight paddles.

This boat is not built double-ended, as the regular whale-boat is, but has very much the appearance of what is known in the inland waters of the southern part of the United States as a "cunner," or "dugout." This "dugout" is generally made in one piece from the trunk of a large pine or cypress tree, and hollowed out with tools suitable for the purpose, or burned out by fire, the fire being applied carefully; and, as it chars, the coals are taken out until deep enough to be smoothed and shaped inside. Much more might be said upon the question of whale-boats, but enough description is had above merely to give the reader an idea of what sort of boats are used in the whale industry.

CHAPTER XX.

AROUND CAPE HORN.

We were now in the month of December, and steering to round Cape Horn. Crossing the equator we ran down to within a few degrees of the coast of South America, to the westward of the Falkland Islands, and through the Straits of Le Maire, with a staying wind from N. N. E., a steady barometer, and all the indications of fair and settled weather. Leaving the straits we steered for the Horn, taking a S. W. course with wind from N. E. to S. W., doubling the Cape as close as wind and weather would permit.

We had a fairly good passage into the Pacific. It was not as ugly and boisterous as my imagination had pictured it from the yarns I had heard in the forecastle—it was as rough as I wanted it, though. We saw the Magellan group, which are three small misty vaporish clouds, in the southern part of the heavens, showing just above the horizon, after we crossed the southern tropic.

The Southern Cross came into view, beginning to appear at about 18° N., being, when we were off Cape Horn, nearly above us. It was a lovely night, the pale moon sailing through an unflecked sky shorn of her chariot of flaky clouds, and accom-

panied by all that celestial procession visible at night in that latitude.

It took our old hulk about sixty days to round the Horn into the Pacific, with some bad weather, of course; but on the whole it was not such a dreadful passage as it had been painted—not this time. Once into the Pacific, we cruised along, picking up a whale now and then, about two hundred and fifty miles off the coast of Chile, between 45° and 46° South, and round the Island of Huago, the south end of Chiloe Island, off Mocha Island, off the port of Talcahuana, and round the islands of Juan Fernandez and Masafuero.

We worked our way toward Panama, where we refitted. This city is one of the oldest in America, and belongs to the United States of Colombia. It is essentially a Spanish town, having been founded by the early Spanish adventurers and explorers. It is situated on what is called Panama Bay, which is not a harbor, but only a long indentation of the coast; and, in approaching it, one has no idea that it is a bay.

There is a water-gate, giving entrance to the city, and here all must land who approach in boats or launches. There are no wharves, as in other cities. Passengers crossing the Isthmus by rail land from a tug at a long wharf situated at the lower part of the city. Nearly the entire front of Panama is protected from approach by a bed of lava-colored rock, which is almost entirely covered at high tide.

Frowning over this rocky bed are the ruins of a

once massive fort, the dungeons of which, if I remember, were then used as a prison. The entrance to the city, to which one mounts from a boat, is through a gateway, led up to by a short flight of well-worn stone steps. At this gateway, opening out into the bay, congregate all the boatmen, sailors and idlers of all descriptions and of many nations, with a quota of native policemen armed with rifles and clad in blue uniforms trimmed with red.

Entering this gateway, one is ushered into the narrow quaint streets of a Spanish town, having adobe houses, ruined churches, a half-Moorish Cathedral, and, to an American, a cosmopolitan population.

This old town was founded in 1673, and is New Panama. Old Panama was some ten miles farther down the bay, was founded in 1518, and was the treasure house for all the gold, silver and precious stones of those Spanish-conquered countries. The buccaneers and sea-rovers of the sixteenth century robbed it whenever there was anything to carry off. Morgan, the freebooter, sacked it in 1671, driving overland to the Atlantic side one hundred and seventy-five mules laden with treasure.

The present Panama was founded in 1673. The streets are narrow, as are all streets laid out by the Spanish conquerers, and on some of them the houses are as high as three stories, though there are modern ones from which balconies jut out over the foot-way, so that, if inclined, the dwellers might fight a duel from opposite sides of the street.

There are many old adobe houses of one story, as old as the settlement itself, and one or two good-sized hotels. Churches are numerous, perhaps thirty of them, including monasteries, the most of which are in ruins or in a patched-up condition of preservation, but all old and venerable.

There is the inevitable cock-pit, one of the foundation stones of the Spanish-American settlements, and the just as inevitable arena for bull fights, both of which are Sunday amusements. It is, no doubt, a trait belonging to mankind and common to the peopled world to enjoy a contest of any sort, whether between birds or dogs, four-footed or two-legged animals.

But to a rightly-balanced mind, these contests, to be enjoyable, must grow out of the passions as awakened by the instinct of self-preservation.

The horse trots, because it is the exercise of a power given him by nature, and because he enjoys it when in good condition; the dog goes to the rescue of his master with a ferocious instinct of justice; the wild animals of the forest fight for supremacy, guided by the instinct of self-preservation; and man, the embodiment of physical perfection and intellectual strength, combats for right, for love of country, to resent insult, and in defence of those depending upon him. In all this there is no brutality—it is Divine wisdom.

It is only when man comes in with a refinement of cruelty, made keen by the greed of gain, that this natural propensity to combat is erected into

crime, under the pressure of cruel devices invented by the superior animal, man.

Thus, the cock is provided with sabre-like, razor-edged, steel spurs with which to end the battle by slashing thrusts. The animals for the arena are bred to an exaggerated instinct of combat for the pleasure and profit of his brain superior—man. The horse is often put to his paces when out of condition and cruelly forced to a gait that, were he in condition, he would perform with ease and spirit; and man, noble man, he is fitted with "gloves" and made to stand up in a prescribed space before his fellow, against whom he has no grievance, for a wager; all the noble instincts of manhood prostituted to the greedy desire of possessing a purse of gold by studying how his opponent may be beaten into insensibility long enough for him to claim a sum that brains could not win in a lifetime. But I am not a reformer.

I denied myself the cock-pit, for the reason that I deemed it brutal—indeed, the most brutal exhibition of man's rapacity, except the so-called sport of a dog-fight. There was an exhibition which I did not resist. I had never seen anything of the kind, and was prepared to do violence to my feelings, with a promise to myself that I would not so offend again.

This contest, of which I am going to tell you, was to be a battle between an ordinary, every-day steer and a tiger. The tiger was a part of a stranded

menagerie and circus, and the proceeds of the show were to enable the troupe to escape being jailed for non-payment of debts. The steer was taken from a herd at pasture, and the combat was expected to be a gory one.

There was a large crowd gathered of all classes, and the musical tones of the beautiful Spanish language was prostituted to urging on a hoped-for bloody and deadly combat. It was in the regular arena, a space open to the sky and provided with benches topping each other in gradual ascent. The noise was Babel when the steer was let in, and cries of "*bravo*," "*bravissimo*" "*bravississimo*" greeted the animal.

The steer sauntered in and commenced browsing on the clumps of succulent grass growing around the edges of the slaughter-pen, without being disturbed in the least at the noise of his welcome. After the eyes of the expectant crowd had feasted on the steer, and cries of impatience rent the air for the appearance of the tiger, that animal was let in, or rather dragged in, for he seemed more a great good-natured cat than a wild blood-thirsty beast.

The steer continued plucking the grass, occasionally ruminating, taking no notice of the antagonist he was expected to meet. The tiger, when rushed into the arena, went to the border-line of the enclosure in a stealthy, cat-like way, and squatted down with extended paws, into which he put his head in the most complacently domestic way imaginable.

He looked lazily around as if he were in no way interested in the scene or in the crowd present, and commenced polishing his massive head with his great paws, as a cat does when washing her face, and so continued with an occasional rest and yawn, and resumption of the toilet.

The steer, deliberately grazing, found his way around to the tiger. Expectation was rampant, hoping to see the tiger leap upon the steer and begin the fight. The steer, however, seemed to have no animosity against the tiger, the latter being in even as amiable a condition of mind.

The steer lowered his head in a friendly way, giving a half snort, and the tiger responded by raising up his eyes to see who the visitor was. The crowd cried out "*Caramba! caramba! No es bueno.*" The *toreros* were sent in with waving red cloths and prods to stir the combatants up for the satisfaction of those who had paid to see blood. But neither of the animals would fight; it was not in them.

They not only refused to show any warlike spirit, but on the contrary evinced a disposition to fraternize. The steer was a peaceful animal, not bred for the arena, and the tiger had been punched so much with hot irons while a performing animal that the savageness of his nature had been rooted out, and in its place had set in a cat-like amiability beautiful to behold.

The show ended much to my satisfaction, but not to that of the crowd which had paid for streams of gore. The air was filled with shouts of rollicking

laughter and profanity, with cries of "*Caramba! No es bueno! No es bueno!*"

Ruins of churches and convents may be seen in almost any part of Panama. There is a great plaza, upon which stands a large and lofty cathedral, which is open day and night. At each corner of this ecclesiastical structure arises a square tower with open belfry, terminating in a small Moorish dome, between which and the open belfry is a wide band inlaid with shells of the pearl oyster.

These show their beautiful mother-of-pearl interior, glimmering and shimmering in the sun's rays like burnished silver. This cathedral was erected in 1760, and has been partially destroyed by earthquake several times, but is now in a fair architectural condition. In this cathedral may be seen, high above the altar, an image of our Saviour, twice life-sized, of solid silver.

Now and then one meets with an ancient Spanish adobe house, in a Moorish cast of structure; but they are rare now, time having swept them away. There is a very old church standing down toward the water front. The whole interior shows the ravages of time, and these are made more apparent by modern attempts to preserve it. There is in this church an image of our Lord on the Cross, which to me was excruciatingly painful; t was realistic; so lifelike with its air of suffering and anguish as to make one shudder, the lineaments portraying the most intense agony.

High up on the towers of the cathedral, good-

sized trees were growing, larger than one's wrist, probably from seed wafted across the Pacific, or deposited by migratory birds. They seemed to have a good firm rooting, and were green with life and vigor.

The Isthmus of Panama is about on the line between Central and South America, and it is here that De Lesseps commenced the work of the Panama Canal. The advantages of a ship canal across this narrowest part of Central America has invited the interest of the engineers of the world for over three hundred years. There is in the town library of Neuremburg a globe of the date 1520, made by a mathematician named John Schoner, upon which is traced a line of canal across the Isthmus of Panama —the project is almost as old as the discoveries of the Spaniards.

It was plain that the whole undertaking was in a state of stagnation. Along the line of the railroad from Panama to Colon were millions of dollars worth of material and property going to waste, and thousands of men of nearly all nations waiting for whatever might turn up. At Colon, or Aspinwall, there was more open daylight wickedness than I had any idea could exist anywhere.

We visited *el palacio* of De Lesseps, at Colon. It was surrounded by the most exquisite grounds, quite a park, and filled with tropical plants and fruits. In front of *el palacio* stood a bronze statue of Columbus. This work of art was presented to the Republic of Colombia by the Empress Engenie,

and so little was it appreciated that it lay for a long time in the mud, where it was dumped, before it was set up.

Colon, at the time we were there, was one of the wickedest places I had ever seen, being crowded with a cosmopolitan population, composed of natives, negroes from Jamaica, and in fact nearly all nations, attracted there by the prospect of work and fat contracts from the Canal Company, and all were out of employment. The plank sidewalks were crowded with gaming tables, and the lust of gold was as vividly portrayed by the whole population as that shown by the buccaneers of old, who crossed the Isthmus, fresh from despoiling ancient Panama, to ship their plunder on the Atlantic.

CHAPTER XXI.

PROMOTION.

One morning, Mr. Ryder hailed me as I was passing forward, saying:

"Quickstep, the old man wants you in the cabin."

"All right. Shall I go now?" I asked, anxiously.

"Yes, go just as you are."

Now, the old man on shipboard always means the captain. No matter what his age may be, that familiar cognomen is applied to him. If he is a good, kind officer, his discipline tempered with consideration, the nick-name is used with as much affection as Jack is capable of; but if he is cruel, exacting and bad tempered, it becomes one of defiance. Speaking of the captain of another ship, the name "skipper" is the one always used.

I could not imagine what I had been summoned to the cabin for, not being aware that my duty had not been done, or that I was delinquent in any way. However, I was wanted, and that was an order, not a request, which I proceeded to comply with, and, in some trepidation made my appearance in the quarters aft. Entering, I spoke up:

"Mr. Ryder said I was wanted aft here, sir."

"Yes," answered Captain Ransom, "I have consulted with Mr. Ryder about putting some one

in the place of the man we have lost—the boat-steerer. The mate has spoken very well of you, and if you think you understand the duties, I will appoint you to Guy's place."

This confused and partially stunned me for a moment—indeed, it quite took my breath away, so unexpected was it. However, I stiffened up my courage, replying:

"I am familiar with the duties, sir, though I have never struck a whale, and I would very much like to have the promotion. But I am sorry that I am going to get it at the expense of the death of a shipmate."

"That is a generous sentiment," said the captain, "but we are all liable to sudden death, and it may be your turn next, though I hope not, for it is a sad enough event to have seen two men taken from the crew in one voyage."

"It is, sir, as you say; but we all take that chance when we ship. I thank you, sir, for this favor, and will endeavor to do my duty."

"Upon that depends your retention of the place. You will now mess with the mates.'

The steward was sent to bring the mate, who came immediately, and, upon entering the cabin, was accosted by the captain:

"Mr. Ryder, Quickstep has been advanced to the place which the lost Guy had, and in future will mess with the mates. You understand?"

"Yes, sir; fully."

I backed myself out without another word, leav-

ing the mate in conversation with the "old man," and stood outside in a sort of daze at my good fortune—I could not yet realize it. But, being a most decided promotion, it pleased me very much, and, besides, it took me out of the forecastle. That meant to me a great deal—it was a step forward in my ambitious plans of advancing myself to command.

Some hours after, I noticed Mr. Ryder standing at the lee rail, looking over at the tumble of the sea, working itself into swelling hills and valleys capped with frothy foam and tossing spray by the drive of the wind. Going up to him with gratitude in my heart, and stammering on my tongue, I said:

"Mr. Ryder, I thank you for your share in my promotion—I will try to merit it."

"Oh, that's nothing, my lad. The 'old man' asked me, and, thinking you deserved it, I said so. I never knew you to 'skulk' or 'sojer,' and that's the only kind of a man to take the boat's head in a chase."

I thanked him again, and went to my work with a light heart. I think the men were not displeased at my good luck. Ned Ricks was enthusiastic about it, that is—so far as words went, and they, of course, were sincere; but his features retained that immobile rigidity so natural to him, nothing like the faintest shadow of a smile appearing, not a muscle of his face betrayed it. With genuine feeling he came up to me, speaking before I could get a chance:

"I'm right glad, shipmate, that you've got out'en the fok'sle, 'cause ye desarves it. Thet won't make no dif'rence about our bein' frens, will it?" The latter part of the question being drawn out as if to have confirmed, what I am sure he was already confident of.

"Why, no, Ned; not if I were captain."

"I knowed it," said the simple-hearted fellow, and went forward to his work.

I soon settled down to my new place, the duties being the same, except when the boats were lowered, the difference being in my escaping the forward quarters, and having a station in the head of the boat when in chase of a whale.

Cutting in a bowhead differs somewhat from that of cutting in the spermwhale. In the latter, it will be remembered, the head is cut off, while in the former, the head is not so separated from the body. The whole inside of the upper part of the head or jaw of the bowhead, containing the bone, is taken out, hoisted on deck, the slabs cleaned free of the gums, in which they are embedded, and, after thorough drying, are stowed away in the hold.

The bone located in the upper jaw, and the head is nearly all upper jaw, consists of a series of whalebone plates, or slabs, acting as a sort of curtain with fringed edges, which drop down inside the lower jaw, forming a kind of sieve through which the animal strains the water, taken into the enormous chamber inside the jaws, from the food, by

violently ejecting the water through the fringed edges of the plates, leaving the food to be swallowed.

The bowhead is from forty to fifty feet long, sometimes much longer, the largest yielding from two hundred to two hundred and seventy-five barrels of oil, and from three thousand to three thousand five hundred pounds of bone.

The bowhead is the goal of every whaleman's ambition on account of its immense yield of oil and bone. This leviathan seldom attains a length of sixty feet, although larger ones have been caught. It is a stout-bodied animal, and what it lacks in length is compensated for in circumference. Its ponderous head, it has been guessed, is more than one-third the entire length of the monster from lip to fluke.

Behind the plates of bone is an enormous tongue, which is hidden and incapable of protrusion; it is a fatty mass interlaced with sinewy flesh, yielding about one-tenth the quantity of oil procured from the blubber.

The excitement of chasing whales varies in intensity according to the number sighted, and according also to the circumstances attending the capture of each. One yielding up the ghost in a short time, another making a prolonged fight, lasting for hours, even for a whole day. It sometimes happens that all the boats belonging to a ship are stove by the whales, one after the other, and utterly ruined, defying the carpenter's efforts to patch them into the semblance of a boat.

Then the captain, in order to continue his voyage, is obliged to depend upon getting boats from other vessels of the fleet, procuring one from this ship, another from that, until he has as many as he needs for his purposes. In this the whalemen are all liberal, as any one of them may be caught the same way.

Often the boats, in the eagerness of pursuit, lose sight of the ship; or, a storm arising, the crew have to remain out all night, managing to keep the ship's position as near as possible, in dew, rain and storm, to be picked up the next day, or perhaps, two or three days after, cold, wet, wearied and starving. It may happen that they drift about the ocean until some passing vessel rescues them from a state of suffering, by both thirst and hunger. Horrible to speak of, they may never be seen again, drifting to remote parts of the ocean, out of the track of vessels, where, without food or water, they perish in storm and tempest, or, in a summer sea of glory, dying by inevitable fate.

Many times in the arctic regions, in a sea of ice, hail and snow, the ship is surrounded for days, often weeks, with icebergs and hummocks, which hold in inhospitable grip both vessel and crew. Sometimes when a whale gets "good and fast" he descends into deep water, where he remains "sulking" for hours, as if to tire the enemy out, or freeze him to death.

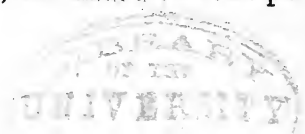
He must come up, however, to breathe, and when he does, it is in somewhat of an exhausted state,

when an iron goes into his life, preventing him from "sounding" again, and, after spouting volumes of blood and mucus "fins out" without another struggle. He is then added to the catch.

The size of the bowhead is generally measured by his captors, calculating the number of barrels he will try out. The rule of judgment is: when the whale is of a dark brown color it is a two-hundred barrel capture; when black, about one-hundred barrels; and when grayish, seventy-five barrels, more or less. The latter are captured among broken floes at the beginning of the season. The size, color, and yield of whales is according to their age, all being of the same species.

There is much idle time on board a whaler, when on the whaling grounds or cruising for prey. Each man, except the idlers, which are the cook, steward, carpenter, and cooper, has to stand watch on deck. The idlers do any duty necessary, when the crew is short, or in case of a gale or any other press. If no whales are in sight, and the try works are not in operation, the time is spent in mending and patching clothes, playing cards and checkers, reading, or writing letters, in hope of meeting a "homeward bound" by which to send them.

Many of the men, in early life, may have learned some mechanical trade, and, during the hours of waiting and watching, employ themselves in making something to take home when they return, as presents to friends and relatives. These are generally of a fanciful nature, and made from some part



of the captured game. The men smoke—a great solace at sea—spin yarns and otherwise kill the time which hangs heavy on their hands.

It is a most surprising thing to see a before-the-mast man, with great hairy, tarry hands, doing the finest kind of needle work—work that would put to the blush many women who have comfortable homes and opportunity, but who are destitute of such knowledge—work, so fine, accurate and tasteful, often in colors, as to be a wonder. I have seen a sailor, with hands as large as hams, cut from a block of wood, a beautifully-modeled miniature ship, and rig it, leaving no rope, block or tackle out, the rigging being of the smallest cotton sewing thread. Jack may be seen, when it is his watch below, with his "ditty-box" before him, engaged in repairing his clothing, or that of a shipmate, who is too idle or ignorant to do it for himself, receiving pay in tobacco or promises.

The "ditty-box" is part of a sailor's kit, being equivalent to a lady's work-basket on shore. This box contains everything that the fancy of the owner prompts him to pick up, if not too large—an assortment of needles, pieces of cloth for patches, wax, thread of various sizes, buttons, a thimble, and small things like curios gathered in his rambles over the world.

There are always two articles in the ditty-box, which portray two phases of a sailor's life—a pack of cards well worn, and saturated with the odors of the forecastle, and stained by frequent use, which

satisfies his grosser nature, and a small Bible which gratifies whatever of intellectual or religious aspirations and sentiment he may have. This precious book may have been given to him by a loving mother, accompanied with a farewell blessing and a maternal kiss, when waywardness led him from home to begin the rough and stormy journey of life.

It may have been a costly one with elegant binding, given to a son whose prospects in life were promising, with no thought that it would ever find its way into the reeking forecastle of a ship, or its owner be reduced to the condition of a common sailor—the associate of men, many of them, with characters, I am forced to admit from experience, that are vile, but who are, alas! often found in the bunks under the bowsprit, both of whalers and the regular merchantman.

Sunday is the day for all this, and some of the men, if they have no work of their own, will assist a shipmate to repair his wardrobe. I have seen a big-fisted fellow, with a quid in his mouth large enough to set one speculating as to how it was ever stowed there behind the wide-extending lips, put an entire new seat in a pair of breeches in a manner so perfect as to do credit to a Broadway tailor. It would not very likely be of the same color as the original material, but Jack is never impeded by such trifles, and, consequently, the dress of a gang of merchant seamen lack that enforced uniformity that prevails on board a man-o'-war. But it is

equally picturesque with the war sailor's blue shirt and flaunting trowsers.

I have been one of a gang of men at work on deck with clothing that had been patched so many times as to have lost its original color, looking as though the whole of Joseph's descendants had been mustered to display and transmit the radiance of the original Joseph's coat. Often, on a Sunday, a few men of the crew are seen, snugged away in some sheltered place, the ship requiring but little attention while running along under all plain sail, lashing the sea into foaming anger, intently reading the Bible—reading from that sacred volume passages they had read over and over again, and marked, perhaps, by a loving mother, wife or sister, that attention might be given, and lessons pointed out of how to live according to the precepts taught there.

I cannot vouch that the study of such passages ever made much impression, the reading often being in fulfillment of a promise exacted when the reader was leaving home. But of this I am certain, that such reading did not make worse men of them.

Then photographs are brought out, sometimes family pictures, which are exhibited with pride; often the semblance of the loved one at home, "the girl I left behind me," which pictures are subject of confidences between chums. Then all the particulars are gone over, the hopes and long-

ings; for the heart of the sailor is as prone to gush with love as that of the landsman.

These confidences oftener make faster friends of seamen than any common interest they may have in the voyage, or any other thing that may happen on shipboard. Friendships like these often light the fok'sle with genuine human sentiment, making that hole more endurable, especially when the occupants are not too deeply imbued with the infection growing out of life before the mast.

But who, as a general thing, cares anything about a common sailor? They are for the greater part of their lives out of the ken of human sympathy, in an element riotous with danger and death; subject to the dominion of a captain, often brutal by nature and unfit to have command, whose teachings are those of force and not of persuasive example.

There is a devil in the human heart, inherent it is claimed, which is especially fostered at sea, and which is often developed into its worst form by bad treatment. Cut off from his kind, aloof as he stands, a sailor cannot understand the subtle usages of shore life, and captains often undertake to instill Christian principles through the aid of a marline spike rather than by kindly acts and example.

CHAPTER XXII.

OFF FOR THE ARCTIC.

"It is an ill wind that blows nobody good," and in this case the wind was in my favor. The loss of two men, Guy and Frenchy, was the dreadful means of giving me promotion to the position of boatsteerer.

The time of the year had now come when it was necessary to start for the arctic seas, in order to be in for the bowhead fishing; and so we left the Sandwich Islands after landing what cargo we had on board.

The gloom that had settled down on the ship in consequence of the loss of the two men was not yet wholly dispelled. Captain Ransom was keenly alive to the sensation, somewhat morbidly I thought, and seemed full of doubt as to the result of this latter part of the voyage.

He seemed to have much confidence in the mate's judgment, and had frequent conversations over the matter with Mr. Ryder, but always with the same result; he was possessed of the idea that the voyage would end in disaster.

In his own modest way, Mr. Ryder commended him for his care, for his ability and knowledge of a seaman's duty, and, so far as he was able to judge, thought the captain was doing well enough.

All this time I had a sort of secret understanding with myself during my intercourse with the captain that the confidence he had placed in me as to my nautical ability was not well bestowed, for, in my own opinion, I was but a greenhorn.

However, I had made no serious mistakes yet, though my misgivings were full and plenty. The work of the ship was going on about as well as it had ever done on the voyage, and, notwithstanding Captain Ransom's fears, Mr. Ryder and myself hoped they would continue so.

We did not think our captain quite as strong as when we entered on the voyage, though we both hoped he would improve in this before we reached our destination. Formerly, he had been quick to observe and prompt to execute whatever he might be doing, or ordered to be done. Now, whatever he did was all right; but there did not seem to be in it that snap of quick judgment habitual to his mind—there seemed an element of doubt in what he did—he considered it for a longer time.

The Peri was booming along with as much as could be got out of her under all sail, the wind coming about 'midships over the starboard rail. It was one of those long holidays which often succeed the cutting in and trying out of the last whale captured. The men were sort of half-way employed and half "sojering," going about the work as though they would much rather abandon it altogether in favor of a chase in the boats after a whale.

The watch below was getting all the fun possible out of the dearth of whales. Mending clothes, playing games, singing, scrimshawing, yarning, quarreling and kindred occupations of shipboard life were the order of things day and night; and so the time passed as we sailed toward that destination where the arduous labor of catching bowheads awaited us—provided there were any to capture.

The day had passed and the evening came with its roseate hues, which, changing into a dreamy twilight, lingered long over the ship, fading gradually out into a radiance of colors, and finally passing into that period between the last glimmer of light and an intense darkness, illumined by myriads of glowing celestial fires.

I was walking the deck full of my own thoughts, thinking of my own advancement from the time I had become a sailor, of my good fortune in being selected first for boat-steerer and of the responsibility I had assumed in accepting the latter position. The only consolation in the proposition, aside from endeavoring to do my duty, was in the fact that the captain had entire confidence in me, and that whatever had come to me in the way of duty I had performed as far as I knew to the satisfaction of my superior officers.

Then, recollections of my boyhood came thronging upon me; of all the events of my early life, of my doubts and fears, of my indecisions in choosing a profession, and, last, of dear Miss Searson, with her kindly ways, her benign face and presence, of

her trembling ringlets and of her old-fashioned make-up, of all her goodness to me, and my possible unworthiness, though I had tried hard to merit all she had done for me.

Then, the vision came to me of her neat and wholesome rooms, she busy with her daily domestic duties, and, on top of all, came the scene of leaving her to go to sea—she in a fainting fit upon the sofa. I wondered how she was getting on, whether she was still living, and if she yet remembered me with the affection she had shown since the death of my dear mother. I had received not a word from her, of course, for there was no way of communication between the land of my birth and those far-away seas, so full of danger, song, poetry and fable. The only chance of getting a letter from the United States, supposing one had been written, was to meet an outward-bound vessel from some northern port with a mail for the South Pacific, or, for that matter, anywhere on the broad ocean.

It was ten o'clock in the morning, and my watch on deck. The men were at work washing up the deck, after having used the holy-stones—an exaction of our captain, which had been kept up. Buckets were cast over the ship's side by brawny arms, dipping up the bright and sparkling sea waves, with which the decks were swashed.

Brooms and mops were briskly moving, plied by the strong hands of the men, making a picturesque scene in their many-colored rags, donned for the occasion their stalwart limbs knotted with muscles

partially bared to the sun and wind, defying them both. I was so intent on having well done what I had ordered the men to do, that I did not observe Captain Ransom coming from his cabin. He came up to me before I was aware of his presence, accosting me pleasantly.

"Why, Mr. Quickstep, you seem determined to keep this deck as clean and neat as a lady's "boudoir."

"I like to see it sweet and clean, sir; besides, you know this holy-stone business is one of your hobbies."

In the matter of cleanliness our captain was something of a martinet, and, looking straight into his eyes, I observed that he was pleased.

"I like to see it so," he replied, "though there are other things I would much prefer to see." Continuing, he remarked—

"I want to see the deck an inch thick with blubber drippings, the hold stowed with full casks, and those covered with whalebone chock under the deck beams." An anxious look coming over his face.

"That is something like it, sir; but, if our fate is to get a cargo in a hurry, we shall get it. If we are to linger away from our homes for two or three years longer, we must accept that, too."

"That is all true," he answered, in reply to my idea of the fitness of things. "But I shall not feel easy until we land in Boston harbor with a full cargo, and I get my release from the owners. This

command weighs heavy upon me. I cannot help it, nor divine the cause.

With presumption, which I was too inexperienced at the time to see, I answered—

"Captain, that we are not getting as many whales as we should, is no fault of yours. Otherwise, we are getting on much as we did before. If you have made a mistake at all, it was in making me boat-steerer. I feel the weight of my position and I am trying as hard as I know how to make myself proficient." This as though I were mining for a compliment—though I protest I was not.

"Don't bother about that. I knew what I was doing. I knew that you were but a young sailor; but my confidence in you is as much in your cool temperament as in your nautical knowledge," and he looked as though he thought I was pushing the question too far. "That's all right," he continued, "I am going to my cabin to work out our position. If anything happens requiring my presence, have Mr. Ryder send for me," and he walked, slowly away looking up at the trim of the sails, and out over the vast ocean.

This conversation with my superior officer grated a bit on my senses, for the reason that I seemed to be taunting him with his indiscretion in appointing me. This was not my motive. There was, perhaps, an unconscious feeling that prompted me to try and learn what my commander thought of me—I suppose I was really fishing for a compliment, and did not know it.

The ordinary routine work on shipboard was familiar enough to me, and, in that respect, I had no difficulty in filling my new position. I had some natural dread of stormy weather and of unforeseen things that might happen. However, I made up my mind to accept the present time for what there was in it—not to anticipate trouble, but to await whatever might happen in the future, endeavoring to meet in the proper spirit whatever came in the shape of bad luck.

The ship was sweeping along over a riotous sea, topping the restless, ever-changing waves, tipped with a delicate tracery of fringed foam. The deck now and again was washed by a shower of needle-like spray from over the bow, as heavy as a summer rain. The vessel was taking care of herself, as it were. The only man being really occupied was the man at the wheel, whose rugged features betrayed the anxiety he felt in frequent glances aloft to get the trim of the sails, gave a twist or two of the wheel from port to starboard and back again, and a hasty look from the compass to the shivering canvas.

CHAPTER XXIII.

MERMAIDS.

THE men were gathered around the windlass and on the heel of the bowsprit, sitting, standing, lounging and giving vent to the gross superstitions with which their minds were teeming—superstitions that belong now to by-gone days, but which are yet tenants of the forecastle.

Even young men, intelligent mariners, fall readily into the belief of the old "shell-backs," after being in the forward part of a ship under the knight-heads for a few months. The mermaid and her loves, as seen by sailor-men in the various seas they have visited, and under curious circumstances, was just now the theme of discussion.

There are many of the denizens of the forecastle who will make "affidavy" that they have seen this fabulous creature, and spoken to her—nay, made love to her. The *matelot* of fifty years ago still clings to fancies that have become more firmly rooted in his beliefs than any theory of religion that may by chance have gotten a lodgment in his philosophy. These superstitions he imbibed on his first voyage; and as well may one attempt to modify the belief that all these wonders exist in the depths of ocean, as to reason with a hungry lion about the ownership of a meat carcass

Many men who go down to the sea in ships, in our day, are not mere before-the-mast machines. Many of these are entering the dawn of separate thinking power, with ability to put this and that together, separating the chaff from the grain; but the wonder-believer still exists.

It is not only the untutored sailor, riding out a gale which seems to him to be an avenging thing, who hugs these wierd fancies to his bosom—for nearly all rude people who dwell upon the sea-shore within sound of the ocean's constant roar, in communities remote from education and opportunity, share these beliefs; they, like the mariner, attribute supernatural powers to everything they cannot understand.

The idlers on deck, congregated in the angle formed by the bows of the ship for a rallying point, were exchanging yarns. Jack's yarns seem to come into his mind without any order, and when he starts in on one, after listening to that of his fellow-shipmate, it generally has no connection with the subject of the foregoing one, but is just what pops into his head; and, usually, he prefaces it with, "That puts me in mind o' a voyage I made to the coast of Afriky," or to some other part of the world, or some other circumstance.

Jack Staples, who had been looking out over the port bow, suddenly turned to the crowd, saying:

"I jist seen a Portigese man-o'-war under full sail," and he seemed to be inviting the criticism of the crew. He had not long to wait, for Tom Kre-

kit sneered out, "I've bin to sea, man and boy, this fifty year, an' I ain't never seen sich a thing as a fish what's a wessel," looking as though he challenged contradiction.

"Ye ain't, ain't ye?" replied Staples, contemptuously. "'Tain't no fish, it's a animal what's got a shell it rigs into a boat," and the men waited, for they knew that Staples was not yet done his yarn. Krekit looked his disbelief with all his might, merely grumbling out:

"It mought be."

"It moughtent be," said Staples, "'cause it is. I seen one oncte es big es a fore-an'-after, in the Indian Ocean. It was a-sailin' along like it was a pleasurin, an' it hed its oars an' sails all out. They was a thunderin' big shark a-comin' head onto it, an' the look-out on the Portigese man-o'-war seen the fish a-comin'. What does he do but take in the oars, clap on more sail an' runs away on a three-quarter breeze faster nor the shark could swim," looking triumphantly around.

This started Krekit out of all propriety, and he remonstrated:

"Did I understand ye to say, Jack Staples, that ye seen that wi' yer own eyes?" demanded Krekit, looking as though he felt his intelligence insulted.

"Yes, I seen it wi' my own eyes," repeated Staples, and there came a belligerent look into his eyes.

"Then, I ses as how it's a lie," roared Krekit, "an' the man what tells that yarn is a—well, he's

mistook the thing what he's seen for somethin' else—p'raps a mermaid," explained Krekit, looking into Staples' eyes, and feeling that he had gone too far.

"I allow as the man what calls me a liar, 'll have to fight," bullied Staples, determined to have a row; "b'sides, they ain't no mermaids," retorted the speaker, although he had several choice mermaid yarns that he used to get off on every occasion.

Both men jumped to their feet, and there was every prospect of a lively fight, when Ben, the general pacificator, stepped between them.

"Awast there, my hearties. I ain't a-goin' to have no fightin'; scatter my rivets if I do. Can't you fellers enjoy yourselves wi' a little perwersion of the truth 'thout fightin' an' quarrelin' like cats an' dogs. Look ye, my lads, I told Cap'n Ransom as how I'd be 'sponsible for the good conduc' o' this air crew, an' scatter my rivets ef I don't do it."

"Right ye air," cried several voices, among which, those of Staples and Krekit were the loudest, showing that they were glad to escape the necessity of coming to blows.

"My lads," commenced Ben, now that he was in the humor for uncorking his wisdom, "let every man tell his yarn, lie or no lie. I b'leves every yarn what I listens to, 'cause why, 'cause its a heap more easier to b'leve nor it is to hunt for the proof. They mought be shells what kin sail like a vessel, an' I knows they is mermaids, 'cause I've seen 'em."

"'Course they's mermaids, 'cause I've seen 'em, too," confirmed Krekit.

"I'll tell ye what I knows about it," continued Ben, "an' I don't want no man t' onb'leve it; see?"

"Yes, let's have that air mermaid yarn," urged the men, and in an instant Ben was surrounded.

"I was oncte shipmate wi' a sailorman what could look on an' see another man doin' work, what he oughter do hisself, 'thout losin' his appetite for grub. He was a lubberly, sojerin' hulk o' a feller, an' allers a-lookin' for some excuse to shift his work off onto a shipmate. One day, we was a-layin' becalmed off 'en St. Helena, an' a mermaid come up 'longside o' the ship. She was a-balancin' herself on her tail flukes, an' a-combin' of her golden, yaller hair in one hand an' a-holdin' of a lookin'-glass in t' other one, a-fixin' of her frizzes, an' a-lookin' es happy es a sailor's wife wi' the wages of a three-years' cruise in her porte-money, as the Frenchies calls it.

"The sojering fok'sle swab what I'm a-tellin' ye about—I disremember his name jist this minit; howsumdever, thet don't make not no diff'rence—was a-skulkin' in the forechains, an' he seen the mermaid. He was a putty slick lookin' feller for a sojer, an' as soon as thet female fish sot eyes on him, she falls in love an' they begin a-flirtin' wi' each other ontil the sojer—I disremember his name—slipped down on the starboard chain plates, an' the mermaid she retched up for him wi' both arms; but the chain plates was too high."

"Look a here, shipmate," demanded Chain, with an air of incredulity, "when thet air fish-woman retched up for to kiss thet air sailorman what was a-hangin' onto them chain plates, what'd she do wi' the comb an' brush?" and he looked as though he had Ben in a trap.

"Why," answered Ben, with the air of a man who feels strong in the position he has taken, "she clapped 'em in her pocket." And Chain had the mortification of being laughed at.

"Ye see," Ben continued, "jist es the mermaid was a-gittin' of her arms 'round the man's neck, the fust mate come along an' busted the *tater-tate*, es them air Frenchies calls it. The fust mate he seen the man a-sojerin' in the forechains, an', ses he, he ses, 'Ye skulkin' lubber, what air ye doin' of down there? Gittin' rid of yer work agin, I 'spose'; an' he driv the man aloft to slush down the mast.

"The mermaid got scared half to death, jist like shore gals does when they're cotched wi' they're lovers; an' she duv down. Thet's the last we seen of her on thet coast."

"Is thet all of it?" asked several voices, "Didn't she come up agin?"

"Not off thet Island," explained Ben, after cogitating a while; "not off thet Island," and he rested to sharpen the curiosity of his hearers.

"Why don't ye tell the hull yarn es ye was agoin' to do," exclaimed the men. "What's the use o' cuttin' of it off in the middle, es the newspapers does, an' printin' at the end 'to be continuated.'"

"'Bout six months arter thet mermaid put in her disappearance off the coast of St. Helena," began Ben, "we was anchored off the coast o' Californy. The ship was a-gittin' under way, an', somehow, th' anchor got fouled, an' a boat's crew hed to go out forard of the catheads an' loose the thing. The sojer sailorman was one of the boat's crew, an' when thet air boat got 'bout twenty fathom forard o' the ship, one o' them mermaids ris up out 'en the water an' looked into the boat, an' it was the same one as hed fell in love wi' the sojer."

"Belay there, Ben Bosun; how'd ye know 'twas the same one?" asked Chain, feeling certain that he had cornered Ben this time.

"How'd I know 'twas the same one?" hesitated Ben, "'Cause I seen thet air comb and brush a-stickin' out 'en her pocket." And Chain had the laugh against him again for doubting Ben's yarn; and that oracle continued:

"She swum up to the boat, an' put her graplin' irons onto the gunnel clost to where her lover was a-settin' on a thwart. The sojer—I disremember his name—was scart an' tried to push her overboard; but she hanged on. All at oncte, she retched up an' took him in her arms an' pulled him over the gunnel, showed flukes an' nob'dy ever seen the man agin."

CHAPTER XXIV.

"THERE SHE BLOWS."

THERE is nothing quite so dreary and unprofitable on board a whaling ship as to be in a state of expectation from day to day, for weeks, and sometimes for months, in the hope of the inspiriting cry from the foretop, of a whale spout having been seen. When the startling cry does come, it is some such sensation as must be experienced when one comes suddenly into a vast fortune—at least, I suppose it must be faintly like the latter feeling, though I have never experienced it.

The crew was performing regularly the routine duty of the ship in the usual way, and, in the absence of a chance to chase a whale, in an almost dogged silence. There seemed to be no whales—not a misty column to be seen anywhere on the broad expanse of ocean. There was a moderate breeze stirring which kept the surface of the sea in a poetically rough-rippled condition. The waves seemed to be chasing each other; and when a giant wave overtook a pigmy one, they united in a boil of billow and foam, all dancing and glinting in the beautiful sunlight, as though they were animate and knew just what they were doing.

Soon there was to be a scene of thorough excite-

ment on the deck of the Peri, for we were nearing a whale, though as yet we were not aware of it. The man at the cross-tree lookout called the deck, saying that he thought he saw something.

"What is it?" asked Captain Ransom, a little impatiently.

"Can't tell for certain, sir. Thought I saw something like a puff of smoke, and it may be a spout," with a sort of doubt in the tone of his voice.

"Do you see it again?" demanded the Captain.

"No, sir; nothing in sight, sir."

"Mr. Ryder, send another man aloft!" said the captain; "let him climb the foretopmast rigging, or higher if he can."

Mr. Ryder ordered the man Chain to jump aloft, as high as he could get, and keep a sharp lookout. In a few moments the man was in the foretopmast rigging scanning the sea. Pretty soon he cried out in a voice full of confidence and joy:

"Ther' sh' blows. Sperm whale, sir; or my name ain't what my father's wus."

"Keep your eyes open, my man, until you see her again," said the captain.

"Aye, aye, sir; wide open. Ther' sh' b-l-o-w-s agin, two pints off the starboard quarter—a headin' to leeward."

"Keep her in sight, for your life," admonished Mr. Ryder, at the same time ordering all hands to stand by to lower boats.

"Hard a-lee, there! Round with your yards! Keep the run of her there, foretopmast rigging!"

"Aye, aye, sir; got her in my eye," answered the foretopmast rigging.

"Where away?" shouted the captain, staring aloft as though to assist himself in catching every word; "where away?"

"About three miles, sir; straight out on the starboard bow. Ther's two on 'em. Ther' sh' blows!"

"Hoist and swing the boats! Lower away!" and two boats struck the water at the same time.

The men were soon in their places, and away they went. A number of spouts were now seen, and it was evident that we had struck a school of sperm whales.

Mr. Ryder was in one boat and myself in the other. We got off together, when a friendly race commenced for the prize, should there be but one. However, it proved that competition was unnecessary, for there were more than enough for both boats.

"Give way, lads! Down to your oars!" urged Mr. Ryder to his men; and "keep your head cool!" to his boat-steerer.

"Let her go! I'm all right if I get near enough to her," answered the boat-steerer, with the pole of the iron grasped firmly in his hand.

I was as far forward as I could get, with my knee braced hard and firm against the clumsy-cleat. Our boats now separated, each in pursuit of a dis-

tinct rise. In twenty minutes my boat was a mile distant from the one commanded by Mr. Ryder. We were now getting so close on to the prey as to fear that the whale might "gally," when the man at the steering-oar ordered:

"In oars! Take your paddles and dig hard! Keep your paddles clear of the gunnel!"

I was as nervous as a woman, yet, I felt that I had possession of myself. In ten minutes more we were close on.

"Way enough," said I. "In paddles!" and at this the boat glided up to the animal, clear of his flukes and fins, and I let go, sending the iron into his carcass. Unfortunately for me, however, just as the iron reached him he "humped," and it only went into the flabby blubber raised by his humping, and pulled out. I thought I had lost him. He raised his enormous head twenty feet into the air, then rounded like a cart wheel and disappeared, his flukes lashing the water.

"If I don't mistake," said I, to the stern oar, "he'll come up again to the windward."

"Out oars!" ordered the man at the steering-oar, "and lay right down to it. We must have him, my lads."

He came up again within a half mile, and, in about an hour, when we prepared to tackle on to him again. This time I was determined to get him at any hazard. We were soon up with him again, when I struck him well forward of the hump, sending it into him clean up to the lashings. The beast

was badly hurt, and the line whizzed round the "loggerhead" with great speed, when another turn was put on and the line carried aft with a half hitch around the stern-post to check him. The speed at which the line was running out heated it so that water was poured onto it constantly to keep it from burning.

Down went the whale, fathoms deep into the ocean. The line was kept taut, and, as the whale slackened up, was hauled in and coiled ready for another burst should that happen. He ran again, remaining down about an hour, sulking, but came up very tired. The boat was sent up to him once more, when I gave him the second shot. He rounded and showed flukes again, but soon came up, not far from where he had gone down.

The boat went onto him again, and I gave him the finishing stroke with another and third lance, which flurried him, when he started off again, though feebly. I checked him by another turn round the "loggerhead," when he turned, the line slackened, he came to the surface and "finned out."

We rigged him for towing, head foremost, fastened the boat to him in such a manner as to tow easily, and started for the ship. We had been so intent upon capturing the prey, that we had not had time to think of the ship, or notice how far she might be away from us. Upon looking for her, she was not to be seen. She had gone down the horizon, as it seemed to us in the boat, and we strained our eyes for some sign of her whereabouts.

The atmosphere had become quite hazy; but, as our eyes became accustomed to looking through it, we saw a whiteness, like a patch, which turned out to be the sails of the Peri. She was beating about, looking for us. The other boat was not in sight. We kept our eyes constantly upon the ship, until darkness set in, when lights were put on the fore-rigging to guide us. We rowed steadily for the light; but it was almost midnight when we gained the ship, and, by the time we had made the catch fast, it was getting on towards morning.

Mr. Ryder's boat had not returned, nor did he turn up until sunrise the next morning. He was all right, and had in tow a good-sized sperm cow. My prize was a huge sperm bull, and yielded nearly ninety barrels, to say nothing of the "head matter." The capture of Mr. Ryder and my own, gave us over one hundred and sixty barrels to add to our cargo.

I was very glad to have taken the largest whale, as it was my first one as boat-steerer. I do not think Mr. Ryder had any feeling about coming in second best, with the smallest whale. At least he showed none, merely saying—

"Quickstep, the next time the largest one is for me."

CHAPTER XXV.

IN THE ICE.

As related before, we sailed from the Sandwich Islands, for the Arctic fishing, hoping to complete our cargo there, and sail for home. But, as things turned out, we should have done much better to have remained in the calm and placid Pacific and made the entire catch there, in place of going into the ice region.

However awkward the development of the events of life may seem to the participants, it is undeniably a wise provision in the scheme of human life that the future is veiled from us, and that hope is the only vision permitted to the human factor in the world's affairs. Were it otherwise, and it were permitted mortals to see just what is in store for them, the entire human family would be kept either in a state of disquietude, or in an emulously happy condition of expectation, as fate may have ordered.

This would commence when the brain attained reasoning power and last until the final event, when the departed are carried out in obedience to the law of human life, followed by a stream of mourners who fill the procession mainly because they expect the same ceremony to be enacted for them when their summons comes "to join that innumerable

caravan that moves to that mysterious realm, where each shall take his chamber in the silent halls of death."

If destiny had in store for us all that heart could wish for, leaving nothing to be desired, and fortune were known to be constant—if all were disclosed to us in advance—we should doubtless sit down and wait contentedly until the golden horn were emptied into our expectant laps. In the meantime we should remain in a comatose condition, useless appendages to the world's history, to find, perhaps, at our awakening that fate had lavished all that we had desired and dreamed of in another direction, leaving us to mourn over an ill-spent life.

If, on the contrary, it were made plain that destiny was weaving a dire thread of life and accumulating for us all that is poignant and bitter in human life, to be launched upon the current of our lives at a given period, with no pleasure in this world, no hope for the one to come, we should sit down with folded arms and savagely await the decree, and there would be sorrowing and weeping over the better fate of our fellows, or, "here upon this bank and shoal of time, we'd jump the life to come." It is wisely ordained that every one should have a modicum of life's struggles, whether reward is ever reaped or not. However, I am not moralizing on the problem of human life, but only feeling and trying to express that if we had remained in the Pacific, and not gone to the Arctic whaling grounds, we should have done better and been

richer in this world's goods. Perhaps, in this I am but flying into the face of my own theory.

Arriving at the Islands we met the ice, which was so packed that it was impossible to get the ship through it and lower a boat to make a landing. It was imperative for us to land on St. Paul's Island, in order to procure a boat with which to make our complement, as we had lost one by desertion.

There was a man in the crew named Josceylon, who had been grumbling and worthless. After leaving Honolulu, he became discontented and quarrelsome, and impudent in his manner, though not in words. He boasted that he would never go into the ice; but it was thought to be mere bravado, and no attention was paid to it, especially as there seemed no way by which he could avoid it.

But one night, Josceylon and five other men being on deck alone, plotted to take advantage of the confidence placed in them and ran off with one of the boats. This watch, with Joceylon at the head of it, had the confidence of all hands; and that made it easier for them to carry out the plans they had formed.

When all was ready, in the dead of night, with but little headway on the ship, the conspirators cut the tackle which held two of the boats to the davits in such a way that they could not be lowered, if they were discovered and pursuit intended. Then, in furtherance of their design of wholesale desertion, the cabin door was so barricaded on the outside that it would have to be broken open when

it was discovered that desertion had taken place, and thus retard pursuit as much as possible. The companion-way to the forecastle was served in the same way.

Having performed these acts of piracy, they lowered the boat they intended to steal, and were gone. The first intimation the captain had of it was when the ship swerved from her course and commenced to act wildly, the sails flapping and the yards creaking. We never knew at just what time the party decamped, nor what ever became of them.

They may have made their way to the Sandwich Islands, or they may have been lost at sea. This desertion left us one boat and six men short. The boat could be replaced if we stopped at St. Paul Island, and we might ship at the same place natives enough to fill out the crew.

After getting through One-Hundred-and-Seventy-two-Pass and arriving off St. Paul Island, the wind stiff and steady from south-southwest, we endeavored to make a landing at the port on the south side of the Island; but finding that impossible, we sailed round the ice to the north to make a lee, but found the ice packed tight all around the Island.

However, we found tolerably pleasant weather to the leeward, where we lay-to fitting boats and getting ready generally to commence the campaign against the whales as soon as the ice should be open enough to permit us to do so. In a few days the ice had disappeared from the north side of the Island, being driven away by the winds and currents.

Captain Ransom, observing that the north shore was freed from ice, and very naturally concluding that it had gone also from the south shore, clapped on more sail and put the ship on her course for the south'ard of the Island, in order to make abreast of the harbor.

Arriving there we were disappointed in finding the ice pack still closing that harbor, and that a landing was not possible. The wind was still blowing steady from the south'ard, a point or two off, when we squared away for the leeward side, calculating that a day or two at most would clear the ice away and permit us to land at the leeward harbor.

It was yet early in the season, and we were on the ground in advance of other vessels, and in no particular hurry—a few days more or less making no difference in our sailing for the fishing farther north. The captain understood the position of the ship, and, before going to his cabin, gave orders to the first watch to be careful.

"Mr. Quickstep, keep her standing off shore where there is plenty of sea room. It is a bit dangerous to get too near in shore; besides, there is no call to be close in on the north side until the ice has all gone."

"Aye, aye, sir," I answered. "I think I know her position and keep her off it will be."

The captain went to his cabin, saying as he left me:

"If anything happens, call me."

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE LOSS OF THE PERI

In the evening the wind was fresh from the south-west, with a smooth sea, and the ship, as I had good reason to believe, was going off shore a lively jog. But, as we learned shortly after to our sorrow, the strong currents made by the drifting ice were not to be depended upon, for, while the ship seemed to be going off shore all right, in reality the currents were holding her more than she was sailing.

The weather was wet, thick, and hazy with fog, and, about 3.30 in the morning, seven bells, we heard first a grating and then a grinding sound, and the ship fetched up on an unknown reef about three quarters of a mile north north-west of St. Paul's Island.

The reef upon which we had struck is not marked on any known chart, is not known to any class of navigators, nor has it ever been supposed to exist by any whaling masters, as was ascertained by Captain Ransom after the ship had gone to pieces.

Soon after we struck the reef, the ship began to pound, the rudder was unshipped, and the rudder-post carried away; bits and pieces of the keel and shoe, anywhere from ten to fifteen feet, began floating to the surface alongside and away. As each

breaker boomed up over the reef, with a sound like thunder, our doomed ship was sent higher up upon the cruel reef, and let down again with a crash as the breakers receded—she was fast breaking up.

Captain Ransom, now satisfied that all would soon be over, and, all hands being on deck, used every means known to good seamanship to try and get her off. The wind still being from the south'ard, the after sails were taken in, and the forward yards hauled aback to starboard. This should have started her off, but she wouldn't move.

There she was, hard and fast, each surge of the savage sea driving her higher upon the reef, the bottom pounding out of her as she lifted and fell to the lashing of the waves.

The captain, calm and in perfect command of himself, exhorted the men to keep cool and obey orders, compelling them to do so by his own example. Captain Ransom felt certain that the ship could not be started from the reef, and, even if she were, that she would swamp in deep water.

Her bottom was pounded out, and but a short time would suffice to break her up and scatter her timbers over the sea. He ordered the boats to be cleared away and preparations were made to take to them, expecting every moment that the vessel's battle with the sea would end in total wreck.

Whatever could be got at and grabbed up was rushed into the boats and stowed, the captain standing on the gangway until the boats were lowered

and manned. He was the last man to take his place in one of them.

The first boat got away from the ship's side and started for the shore. The captain, seeing the peril of attempting to gain the shore before getting clear of the breakers, hailed the boat and ordered it to row out to sea, get clear away from the breakers and then make the shore, if possible.

Both boats got clear of the ship and the breakers, and commenced battling with the sea. The captain was in the last boat, clear of the danger, but was nearly swamped when a heavy sea caught her under the quarter.

However, the boats got clear away from the ship and the breakers, and lay-to, with the men on their oars, waiting for the weather to clear away enough for us to get our bearings.

Finally, the weather became a trifle clearer, and, the atmosphere not so thick. We began to see just our position, and to make an attempt to get back to the ship in order to secure whatever we could, in case of being driven out to sea. But the old thing was not to be reached, for the sea was breaking over her from taffrail to catheads, and the attempt had to be abandoned and the hulk left to her fate, when we rowed away in search of a landing on the Island.

Both boats made for a place to land; but that was impossible, for the shore was banked up with ice, with a heavy sea breaking over it. Knowing that there were no natives on the north side of the Island

where we had been trying to make a landing, we continued rowing in search of a settlement.

In this we were baffled for some hours, as there seemed not a spot on which we dared beach the boats. The rowing continued around the Island, however, in hopes of finding a place, until we finally got abreast of the village. When the natives saw two boats so near the shore, with an apparent intention of landing, they got wild with excitement, throwing up their hands and gesticulating violently to make us understand that we must not attempt it.

They knew, of course, what we were not aware of, that it was very dangerous to try and effect a landing at this time of the year. There was no good reason for them to expect a ship so early in the season, and, from their frantic behavior, we knew that they were aware something serious had happened to a vessel, or boats would not be where they saw them.

While some of the natives signalled us to keep off, others ran and reported to the agent of the Fur Company, whose principal dépôt is on St. Paul's Island.

The agent gathered some natives immediately and came running to our aid, making signals for us to keep off and not try to land, at the same time signalling for us to follow him down the beach. We did so, to a partially-concealed cove, where we made a landing in comparative safety.

As soon as the boats touched the ice-bound strand

the natives seized them and roused them clear of the ice out of all danger. We had left the ship in such haste for fear she might go to pieces and carry the boats with her, that we embarked only about half dressed. Here we were in a half-naked condition, after a day and a night of battle with ice, storm and sea, with nothing to eat, drink or wear, and bare-footed.

Had this been an uninhabited island in place of a commercial station, we should have been driven to sea and died of cold and starvation. After we had gotten ashore and the boats secured beyond any chance of damage by wind or weather, the Company's agent kindly took us to headquarters, and supplied our wants liberally in every way.

The crew was made comfortable in a vacant house belonging to the Company, and supplied with whatever the men needed in the way of eating, sleeping and raiment. The officers were invited to the agent's own home and treated with all the kindness imaginable. The day after landing on the Island, being heartily refreshed, Captain Ransom had both boats manned, taking natives for pilots, and went back to the ship to see if anything could be saved from her, and, also, to learn her condition.

Arriving there, we found her a total wreck and nearly gone to pieces, with not the slightest chance of saving anything. One whole side had been torn out, and the masts had gone through the bottom

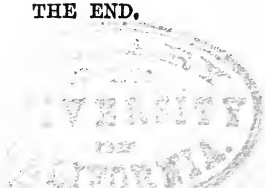
and rested on the reef, holding her as yet from breaking up and floating away.

Our stay on the island was about fifty days, when one of the Company's steamers arrived, and in that we took passage for Onalaska. There being no steamer in that port that we could take regularly, we made our way as best we could to Port Townsend, and from there, as chance offered, to San Francisco. The crew being left quite destitute, shipped here and there on various voyages, as sailors do under such circumstances.

As the steamer in which we had taken passage from the Island passed the wreck, which was only seen by the aid of a glass, we sorrowfully bid adieu to the old Peri that had been our home for over two years—two years of varied experience—and, as the spot where she lay passed out of sight, so did all the high hopes of wages at the end of the voyage fade out forever.

Arriving at San Francisco, Mr. Ransom and myself fitted ourselves out with things we sadly needed and took our journey overland to New York. When I arrived there, my first act was to go in search of my dear old friend, Miss Searson. To my very great sorrow I learned that she had been dead for over a year. Upon further inquiry I learned that she had left me by will all that she possessed in the world.

THE END.



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